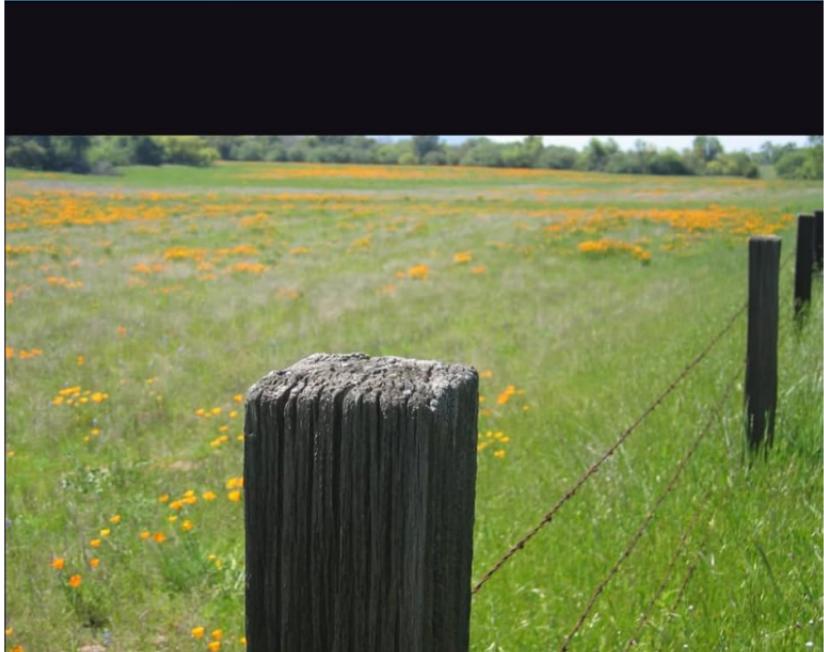


'Til the Cows Come Home

A History of the Cork Farmers Union



**'TIL THE COWS COME HOME - A HISTORY OF
THE CORK FARMERS' UNION**

TIM O'SULLIVAN & TADGH QUILL-MANLEY

**'TIL THE COWS COME HOME - A HISTORY OF
THE CORK FARMERS' UNION**

TIM O'SULLIVAN & TADGH QUILL-MANLEY

First published in 2024
ISBN 978-1-4457-1357-1
© Tadgh Quill-Manley

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE IFU	
	3
THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE MEETINGS 1919-1925: ORIGINS & POST-WAR PROGRESS	
	7
THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE MEETINGS 1926-1928: NEW CHALLENGES	
	47
THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE MEETINGS 1929-1930: DE-RATING AN ISSUE	
	97
THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE MEETINGS 1931-1933: A STORM BREWS	
	135
THE CFU 1934-1936: THE LEAGUE OF YOUTH, MILITARISM & ANNUITIES	
	180
THE TRAGEDY OF MICHAEL PATRICK LYNCH	
	202

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CFU
ELSEWHERE

207

SOURCED PORTRAITS OF RELEVANT
FACES

215

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

AN OVERVIEW OF THE IFU

The Irish Farmers' Union (IFU) was founded in 1919, according to the 'Oxford Reference.' It was composed mainly of the larger Catholic farmers, and, initially, was strongly opposed to protectionist economic policies (which put it into conflict with cereal growers). Regional executives, themselves composed of countless branches, began to form. The quasi-autonomous Cork Farmers' Union (CFU) would later prove to be the most powerful and effective of these groups.

During the year 1920, the Irish Farmers' Union established an All-Ireland Unpurchased Tenants' Association with the purpose of organising rent strikes and advocating for the purchase of tenancies. Unionists who were eager to sell up and travel to Great Britain and those who preferred to stay on their Irish estates were at odds with one another as a result of this, which led to tension in the Irish Free State among the great landowners in the Irish Free State. The protests of the Unpurchased Tenants' Association to the Free State's Land Act 1923 was more intense than that of the Farmers' Party. James Hoban, who campaigned for office in Galway in the general election of 1923 under the title of "Unpurchased Tenants' Association," was unsuccessful in his bid to defeat Farmers' Party candidates. Additionally, the future TD and Farmers Party leader, Michael Heffernan, was a member of the Unpurchased Tenants' Association around the time that he was chosen to represent the Farmers' Party in the same election.

It proved that 1921 was the year that activist Patrick J. Hogan was chosen to serve as the vice-president of the Irish Farmers' Union, noted at this time as an extremely

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

conservative organisation. He was elected to the position of TD for Galway in May, a position for which there was no opposition. As a result of his support for the treaty, he was awarded the position of Minister for Agriculture in the Provisional Government in February of 1922. He remained in that position when the Irish Free State was established. When he first joined the organisation, he was not a member of the executive council, but rather, an extern minister. As a result of the office of extern minister being practically eliminated in June of 1927, he was elevated to the status of full cabinet member.

After a meeting of the executive council of the Irish Farmers' Union (IFU) in Dublin in May of 1922, the Irish Farmers' Party (IFP) was established as a viable political organisation. There was a motion that was approved at this meeting that advised county associations to put forth candidates who had agricultural interests in the next general election. The new party thought that it has been liberated of the duty of adopting a stance on the Anglo-Irish Treaty, as a result of the recent agreement that was reached between Collins and de Valera. As a result, its candidates would be concentrating largely on agricultural problems. "Men with a national record" was the recommendation that was made about the candidates who ended up being selected. This was followed by the holding of a meeting of the standing committee of the national executive of the IFU in order to develop a platform for the new party. Following closely on the heels of the IFU's call to the interim government and the Dáil to restore peace and order in the nation, the union had made the decision to run for election. The IFU made it very plain that it would not let these "Russian" tactics, as they defined them, persist in this nation. This was in reference to the rise in commercial and rural disturbance, which included the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

seizure of companies, the hijacking of milk, and the devastation of the land of farmers. It was said by Patrick Belton (a future TD), a member of the executive, that the most essential issue was to hold an election in order to determine responsibility and to prevent each "Tom, Dick, and Harry" from having their own personal army. A past IFU president, Richard A. Butler, was elected by Dáil members to the first Seanad in 1922.

The IFU was engaged in 'class warfare' with the trade union movement throughout the Revolutionary Period and the rest of the 1920s. In essence, the goal of the wages movement at that time, which was widespread throughout the nation during the more prosperous years of 1917–1921, was to achieve a more equitable distribution of the riches that was produced during the war years. In all likelihood, the disputes took place between opposing classes that were conscious of one another as groups that shared common socioeconomic interests and were in opposition to those of other groups i.e., employers and shopkeepers versus workers and employees; farmers versus labourers. Each of these classes was specifically represented by one or more organisations, including the multiple trade unions for workers, labourers, and employees; and the Irish Farmers' Union for farmers. With that being said, the objective of each social class was not to assert or gain control in the name of a certain idea of society. Consequently, class struggle did not serve as a political instrument with the intention of either maintaining or overthrowing the existing system. Despite this, a significant number of organising employees were inspired by a revolutionary spirit of syndicalism that was fostered by the most prominent trade union, the IT&GWU. Similar to the agrarian fights for land that were carried out by marginalised farmers and landless workers

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

against landlords and graziers in the western region of Ireland, the class struggle here was less concerned with overthrowing the existing system that was based on private property, and more concerned with acquiring land or redistributing it in a more equitable manner. Nonetheless, notably in Waterford, the IFU sought to crush trade union activity and engaged in strike-breaking.

Another instance in which this was true had been in the Co. Meath and Co. Kildare regions. Around half of the membership of the IT&GWU were employed in the agricultural sector by the year 1919. Through the course of the summer of that year, it was confronted with a coordinated resistance by farmers in the shape of the Irish Farmers' Union. Strike action was taken throughout both counties as a result of an apparent lockout in Kildare and a reluctance on the side of farmers in Meath to reach an agreement on pay. An additional lockout that took place in south Kildare during the winter of 1922–1923 provides further insight into the position of the rural working class in the newly formed Irish Free State. Here, the regional section of the Irish Farmers' Union was effective in lobbying the Minister for Agriculture, who then persuaded the Minister for Defence, to take steps to secure the capture and incarceration of prominent labour activists. Agricultural workers had a challenging time organising and mobilising themselves in the post-war environment, which was characterised by a decreasing need for employment. There is little question that the Irish Free State was a chilly environment for the agrarian working class.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE

MEETINGS 1919-1925: ORIGINS &

POST-WAR PROGRESS

At a time when the CFU was still in its infancy, it was difficult to find newspaper articles that detailed its activities in any significant detail. It appears that it was not until the association was well-established and a major player in the politics and commerce of the region that it became a newsworthy organisation.

An extensive number of people were present at a CFU Executive meeting, which was presided over by Mr. P. Bowen, J.P. (Chairman), according to a report that was published in the "Evening Echo" on March 22, 1919. A letter expressing sorrow for the inability to be at the national congress indicated that the Union may not be represented at a meeting of the National Executive of the Irish Farmers' Union, which was scheduled to take place in Dublin on the following Thursday. The purpose of the meeting was to nominate a general secretary or organiser for Ireland. During the most recent Dublin Congress of the Irish Farmers' Union, Messrs. Beamish, O'Donovan, and Fahy (the organiser) presented a report that provided a comprehensive account of the events that took place.

Although the Protestant and Loyalist dominated union in Ulster declared that it would not cut its ties to the campaign, Mr. Beamish declared that the organisation had made the decision to refrain from taking an active role in the movement at this time. Every single delegate that was gathered at the Congress was dismayed to hear this news because they had thought that there would be no obstacle in the way of the endeavour to bring everyone together.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

One of the questions that the Chairman posed was whether or not the farmers from Ulster had broken their promise to take part in the movement.

According to Mr. Beamish's response, they had not left the movement altogether; rather, they had moved back from the position they had first taken. On the other hand, the Chairman of the Congress said that he did not feel hopeless about the Northern members, whose acts were a result of their willingness to keep an eye on political affairs. In the event that such a situation existed, the Ulster farmers sought and desired to be free to deal with such concerns, particularly the topic of division. Despite this, they had not abandoned the movement whatsoever. They should be left to their own ways since they had only been faithful to their own views in the land, according to a member who remarked that the conference should not bother itself with the Ulster farmers. In response to the matter, Mr. Beamish said that the Congress took action by sending a delegation to conduct an interview with the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. After the interview, it was determined that it was adequate, and hopeful promises were extended. With regard to the issue of tilling, the Congress reached a consensus that members should be able to choose for themselves how much land they would till the next year, given that they were guaranteed their prices and that there was a free market. In his opinion, the Irish Farmers' Union was carrying out activities that were beneficial to its members.

In addition, Mr. Fahy addressed the events that were taking place at the Congress, expressing his scepticism over the Departmental claims that Scottish farmers were flooding the Irish market with their produce. He stated that when it came to Ireland, they had the right to demand the prices

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

that they wanted since the cost of manufacturing in their nation was greater than the cost of production in either England or Scotland. Specifically, they requested that prices, markets, and labour be guaranteed. The farmers in the country did not consider shortening their working hours, or other topics that were often addressed in other places; rather, they took on all of the responsibilities that were assigned to them. They needed to start expressing their dissatisfaction in order to stop the situation from further deteriorating. The Secretary of the Department expressed the hope that a conciliatory approach would be adopted, and that labourers and farmers would meet together to address issues that were relevant to their interests, with the intention of reaching a conclusion that was not contentious. They came to this conclusion because they believed that in order to preserve the nation, people who were striving to ensure its well-being needed to have a shared understanding of its wellbeing. To guarantee that farmers could pay the labourers a salary that was commensurate with their work, they anticipated that adequate price fixing would occur in the near future. In response to the idea that the Cork Farmers' Union should become affiliated with the Dublin Employers' Federation, it was determined that no action would be taken with regard to the matter.

In July of 1920, the 'Cork Examiner' published an article stating that the monthly meeting of the Co. Cork Executive of the Irish Farmers' Union took place on July 12th at 9 Marlboro Street in Cork. Numerous people showed there, and the discussions were quite animated. It was Colonel Grove White, D.L. who presided over the meeting while the chairman was not there. After being reviewed and approved, the minutes from the previous meeting were presented. In the correspondence, there were

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

letters from the families of the late Dean Cahill, Currabally, expressing gratitude to the organisation for the compassion that was given to them during their time of loss. Additionally, responses were received from a variety of Members of Parliament (MPs) about the resolution that condemned the payment for a state licence for maintaining current accounts. The secretary responded that the National Executive has taken the issue into consideration since it was brought to their attention. It was recommended in a letter that a Conciliation Board should be established in order to avoid lockouts or strikes that may put the nation's food supply in jeopardy. The letter was sent by Mr. Edmond Lynch, also a member of the National Executive. On the motion of Mr. F. Nolan (Shandrum) and subsequent seconded, it was decided that a committee consisting of seven members of their union, along with the hon. secretary and Mr. Lynch, should be appointed to discuss terms of reference for setting up the Conciliation Board and appointing a chairman who was acceptable to both parties. This decision was made after a lengthy discussion.

The members who were appointed were as follows: Messrs. Cussen, Newtown Shandrum; Captain Clarke, Carrigaline; Wallar, Cunnurabaly; M. C., Midleton; Edward Neville, J.P.; and P. Murphy, J.P., Kinsale. The South Liberty branch's Mr. S. C. Lawlor stated, in response to a resolution that was presented by the Killenaugh branch to protest against the proposal to alter the Agricultural Acts that was being considered by Parliament, that the bill intended to destroy the freedom of agricultural unions in exchange for an illusory protection of price data and records. A resolution was presented by the Killenaugh branch. He proposed the following resolution:

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

"That in light of the fact that the farmers of Ireland have rejected the Agricultural Acts that are currently being considered by Parliament, we would like to bring to the attention of the County Committee of Agriculture and the Cork County Council the actions taken by the Vice-President of the Department in favour of this bill, and in particular to his statements in Parliament that are misleading in the sense that these changes would be welcomed in Ireland."

As a consequence of this, they claimed that they were unable to supply the Department with official returns until it had appointed an individual who acted as a 'genuine' representative of agricultural interests. It was unanimously approved, and the motion was then sent to the Cork County Committee of Agriculture as well as the Cork County Council. Mr. Grover of Killeagh was the individual who seconded the proposal. The subject of the most effective ways to sell agricultural products was brought up by Mr. Walker of Kinsale, who mentioned co-operative shops as a potential solution. It was decided to postpone the topic until the subsequent executive meeting. In order to make arrangements for threshing charges for the next season, a small committee was given the responsibility of meeting with members of the Threshing Mill Owners' Association. During the meeting, the hon. secretary brought to everyone's notice the circular that was issued by the Department of Agriculture, which listed companies that provided seeds of a lower quality. The provision of a list of these companies to each of the branches was his suggestion. In the future, he recommended that branches examine all of the seeds that were delivered to them.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

At the end of the gathering, Mr. Lynch delivered a motivational speech in which he discussed the most effective techniques for handling and categorising wool goods. Although he acknowledged that the quality of Irish wool was exceptional, he also observed that farmers often reduced the value of the wool by branding sheep with tar and combining black fleeces with white fleeces. The fleeces that were branded with tar were subject to a deduction. A number of factors, including the cancellation of big purchases by Japan and the United States, as well as the uncertainty over credit for Germany, contributed to the present uncertainty in the wool market; nonetheless, he anticipated that the situation would improve. The value of a pound of high-quality wool was two US dollars at that time. Only if it were managed in a co-operative manner and graded, he believed, would Irish wool be able to fetch its price. The cost of grading was around seven to sixteen of a cent per pound. It would be possible to build convenient facilities for grading, and then send the wool to London for auction, where it would earn prices that are comparable to those in other cities. A significant quantity of graded wool had already been sent to London by the Railway Association, and the findings were eagerly anticipated with full faith. The production of Irish wool in Ireland was, he believed, an industry that ought to be expanded; but, in order to obtain the best possible results, it was necessary to grade the wool correctly and to then handle it in a co-operative manner. In response to the motion made by Mr. Beamish, which was supported by Mr. Wally, a large number of people expressed their gratitude to Mr. Lynch for his remarks.

The 'Cork Examiner' reported that a convention held in June 1922 by the Cork Farmers' Union and the Irish Farmers' Party was a defining moment for the movement

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

in the new Irish Free State. The convention that was assembled in Cork City witnessed a substantial assembly of delegates representing the numerous county branches, which served as clear indication of the farmers' considerable interest in the upcoming general election. Representatives for a total of eighty branches were in attendance. Also present was Mr. Thos. Linehan, Whitechurch, Chairman of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union, and Mr. M. P. O'Hanlon, General Secretary of the IFP and a representative of the National Executive. After conducting an assessment of the delegates' credentials, the meeting moved on to deliberate on the farmers' perspective regarding the forthcoming election.

Following an extensive and thought-provoking discourse, a consensus was reached, albeit with three dissenting opinions, to nominate candidates who would advocate for agricultural interests in the two regions that comprised Cork County. Delegates from the various regions convened in separate gatherings to deliberate on the optimal number of candidates to be submitted and to carry out the selection process.

The No. 1 area, which consisted of South-East, North, Mid, and South-West Cork, duly proposed, seconded, and approved the following three candidates: Peadar O'Hannigan, Skibbereen; Daniel Vaughan, Ballyhoolahan, Kanturk; and W. J. Fahy, Secretary, Cork Farmers' Union.

Regarding region No. 2, which consisted of East and North-East Cork, the delegates opted to nominate a single candidate: John Twomey, M.C.C., from Garrylaurence, Clonmult.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Sufficient financial backing was ensured, and preparations were initiated to execute an engaged campaign promoting the candidates across the county. As stated in the 'Cork Examiner,' the general meeting of the CFU in April 1923 was presided over by Senator T. Linehan, who served as its chairman. Delegates were in attendance in tremendous numbers.

In a further gesture of appreciation, the Chairman acknowledged the Executive for bestowing upon him the esteemed title of President for the upcoming year. According to him, the fact that they had to repeal a rule of their association that restricted the term of office of president to one year significantly elevated this honour. He extended his sincere desire for the continued good-will between himself and the Co. Executive, and guaranteed them that his utmost endeavours would be dedicated to advancing the Association's mission.

A protracted discourse ensued regarding the necessity of authorising farmers to possess firearms for the purpose of eradicating rooks and vermin that were causing damage to cultivated crops. Rabbit devastation necessitated the replanting of four acres of wheat ground with barley, according to Mr. J. W. Fahy (Mallow). Individuals who were not involved in agricultural activities had previously obtained permits. He was baffled as to why the government would make a distinction between various classes of citizens. Regarding this matter, the Secretary stated he had written to Major-General Reynolds but had not yet received a response.

The subsequent correspondence from Messrs. Murray and Company was perused:—

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

"Regarding Gun Cartridges for Crop Protection by Farmers."

Respected Sir,—Regarding our recent discussion regarding the aforementioned, we respectfully request that you include this issue on the agenda for the upcoming County Cork Association Irish Farmers' Union meeting. Vermin such as crows and rabbits are wreaking devastation on immature, developing crops, and the Dublin military authorities would do nothing unless the Southern Farmers' Unions take decisive action. Simply put, our company is inundated with inquiries from farmers and others requesting clarification as to why it is unable to provide cartridges to them in the same manner as Dublin-based companies. We have submitted multiple applications for permits to import pistol cartridges over the course of the last six weeks. Despite receiving positive recommendations from the G.O.C., Headquarters Cork, the Dublin authorities have yet to grant permission for the entry of cartridges into this region. The Dublin Press features advertisements for the sale of sporting firearms and cartridges by Dublin-based companies, which seem to be receiving preferential treatment in all aspects. The Dublin authorities have the potential to severely disappoint us Southerners; therefore, the Farmers' Union is now obligated to take decisive action.—Yours devotedly, Murray, T. W., and Co."

Regarding the matter, it was determined that the secretary would compose a letter to the Minister of Agriculture and the military authorities. A correspondence from the Coachford Branch expressing dissent towards the Summer Time Act was read aloud.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Mr. P. Brown (Castlelyons) stated that the Chairman deserved the gratitude of the people for his opposition to the bill in the Senate. He requested that it be moved that:

"We express our disappointment and disapproval of the action of the Government in inflicting the Summer Time Act on Ireland contrary to the wishes of the majority of the people, and reiterate our opinion that it causes loss and inconvenience to the Agricultural Community."

Mr. Lislevane Moloney seconded. A copy of the motion was approved unanimously and was hereby forwarded to President Cosgrave and the Minister for Agriculture. Senator Linehan stated that the repeal of the Act ought to be a central tenet of the Farmers' Party platform. Farmers possessed the means to ensure the protection of their interests if they so desired. The imposition of this bill against the will of the majority of the people and against the will of the nation demonstrated the criticality of having a formidable party in both the Dáil and the Senate.

Regarding the issue of agricultural education, the Secretary stated that an early gathering of all interested parties was imperative to ensure that the matter is addressed appropriately in the future. Representatives from the Munster Agricultural Society, the Irish Dairy Shorthorn Breeders' Society, and the Cork County Committee of Agriculture were scheduled to attend a conference organised by their union. A total of six delegates were designated to represent the Farmers' Union at the conference.

A letter was received from Agronomy, Limerick, Dublin, regarding the direct sale of wool to Italian companies and requesting samples from wool cultivators in Cork.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Subsequently, the Co. Council assessments for the upcoming fiscal year were deliberated. The Secretary stated that he had written the Secretary of the County Council the following in accordance with their directives:

*"The Secretary of the County Council of Cork. Respected Sir—Regarding the Cork County estimates for the fiscal year 1923-24, the Standing Committee of my Association has directed me to request the following information from you:
(a) How much in land purchase annuities has this county withheld from the government for the previous year, and to what extent has the disbursement of grants been impacted as a result? (b) Has the administration provided the County Council with a list of individuals who have yet to remit payment? Has the roster, if so, been made public? Should this not occur, would the County Council request that the Government provide a list including the amount owed by each individual? (c) The annual quantity of uncollected rates in Cork County over the previous three years. Have lists of defaulters been published for each poverty law district? If not, would the County Council immediately publish the same? (d) What is the rationale behind the £127,000 increase in projections for the upcoming year? Additionally, it would be greatly appreciated if you could provide me with the date of the meeting where the rate for the upcoming year would be determined.—With all sincerity, Regards, W. J. Fahy."*

"The Secretary, County Council of Cork." Respected Sir—A unanimous decision was reached at the annual meeting of the County Cork Association Irish Farmers' Union: "That the County Council be requested to provide a return detailing the number of officials employed by the Council, including their names, salaries at that time, and their current salaries

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

and bonuses, if applicable." With sincere gratitude, W. J. Fahy, I humbly request that you provide the necessary information to me as soon as possible."

He had obtained the subsequent response:—

Corcaigh, April 21st, 1923. Respected Sir—I am writing to inform you that your correspondence from yesterday would be given due consideration.—Respectfully yours, R. Cullanan."

Without receiving the requested information from the County Council, it would be unfeasible to discuss the estimates in detail, according to Mr. O'Gorman.

At the August 1923 meeting, the CFU and its affiliate, the Irish Farmers' Party, prepared for an election. Senator T. Linehan served as the presider. The Chairman expressed profound sorrow upon learning of the passing of the wife of their esteemed Vice-Chairman, Mr. Edward Neville, Ballytrassna, Lissarda, as he began the proceedings. Mr. Neville and his family would undoubtedly receive the condolences of the entire group, according to him. He would request that their secretary convey to Mr. Neville and his family their sincere condolences.

After the minutes had been read, the chairman stated that the primary objective of the meeting was to establish the representational criteria that would be utilised by the branches during the conventions that would be convened to choose candidates. He was delighted to learn from the secretary that the county's farmers were enthusiastically responding to the request for funds. Additionally, the business interests provided them with financial assistance,

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

which they greatly valued. The secretary read the subsequent, in addition to other correspondence:—

Cork: Moore & Co., Marlboro' Street.

"Hello Sir,—As a subscription to the election fund, I am writing in response to your circular and have enclosed a £2 cheque. Kindly deliver this cheque to Messrs. Mullins and Twomey, collectors, in my locality of Lotabeg, Glanmire. I am pleased to express my support for the objectives of your association. I am certain that a robust farmers' representation in the Dáil would significantly contribute to the stability of the country, encompassing both economic and industrial sectors. After two decades of official affiliation with the Industrial Association, it has come to my complete attention that the manufacturing sector in Ireland is constrained in its capacity for advancement, whereas agriculture, the nation's primary industry, offers boundless potential. It is my conviction that a sympathetic government, which is presently in power, an effective educational system, and the implementation of scientific farming methods could expedite the growth of the Irish agricultural sector by one hundred percent. There are instances of this in the lesser European nations, which I shall not elaborate on. In light of the expansion of the City Parliamentary Constituency to encompass a significant agricultural region, I propose that commercial and farmers' organisations merge or reach a consensus in order to secure Dáil representatives in a manner commensurate with their respective interests. I am certain I would contribute one man's worth.

Yours sincerely,

P. Crowley

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Not long later, the 'Evening Echo' reported that in September 1923, the Cork Farmers' Union had leased a huge steamship and moved many thousand pigs from Bantry. This was done in response to the ongoing dock strike that was taking place in September 1923. The agents of the Union purchased these items, it was claimed, at an exorbitant price per hundred-weight, and distributed them across West Cork. Pig farming had been abandoned by farmers for some time now as a result of the losses that may have been attributed to the strike. The Union's move was taken with the expectation that it would assist in halting the decline of the trade.

The May 1924 conference was crucial. The County Executive of the Irish Farmers' Union met at 9 Marlboro' Street, Cork city, in order to elect the organisation secretary. The selection was ascertained via a process of competition. In the presence of the Executive, the examination was conducted under the direction of Mr. M.F. O'Hanlon, general secretary of the Irish Farmers' Union. The total number of applications for the position was 64. Ultimately, three candidates—Misters. W. Philpott and T. Murphy of Crookstown; E. Cussen of Charleville; and W. Philpott of Kanturk—were deemed to be qualified. In relation to a survey that is presently underway. Following a second ballot, Mr. E.J. Cussen was subsequently proclaimed elected, in contrast to Mr. T. Murphy, who was declared unsuccessful. The finalisation of the appointment was later contingent on the ratification by the National Executive.

During this period, conveyance emerged as a contentious issue. According to the 'Cork Examiner,' the June meeting of the County Cork Farmers' Union witnessed a unanimous agreement to adopt the subsequent resolution,

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

with copies to be sent to President Cosgrave, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, the T.D.s for Cork City and County, and Senators Haughton, Love, and Dowdall:—That the Executive of the County Cork Farmers' Union vehemently opposed clause section 63 (b) of the Railways Bill.

The 'Cork Examiner' reported that at the Co. Executive meeting in August 1924, there was considerable apprehension regarding the agricultural sector's economic situation, and the agenda included significant deliberations. A message from the Co. Kildare Farmers' Union imploring barley producers in Co. Cork to contact the Secretary in Naas, Mr. G. J. Grant, was included in the presented correspondence. They would subsequently be connected with barley producers in Kildare by Mr. Grant. There were directives to provide the branches with the proper advice. In his address, Mr. Edwards, representing United Irish Shipping, elucidated on the advantages of establishing an entirely new company devoted to the transportation of produce from the Port of Cork. While the Executive acknowledged the potential merits of the suggested approach to pricing competition in the shipping industry, they held the opinion that Mr. Edwards had failed to present an adequately exhaustive strategy, and the particulars he has outlined are impracticable for agriculturalists. It was decided to abstain from undertaking any course of action regarding the matter.

The General Secretary stated that T.D.s representing the Farmers' Party would be unable to attend public meetings in County Cork in the immediate future due to the rigorous session in the Dáil. Nevertheless, it was feasible to coordinate a gathering in the latter part of September. A resolution was proposed by the Co. Kerry Farmers' Union

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

asserting that an overabundance of creameries in numerous regions is causing the dairy industry to incur higher production expenses. This resolution, however, was not applicable to County Cork.

The resolution for ratification was put forth by the East Cork District Committee, which stated, "we are extremely concerned regarding the Land Commission's persistent irritability and the subsequent delays in the processing and release of receivable orders." As a consequence, farmers were obligated to pay their annuities and were subjected to costly disruptions at the hands of state solicitors. When supporting the resolution, Mr. O'Donovan (Midleton) provided an account of his firsthand experience with the nuisance that was referenced in the resolution. Shanagarry-based Mr. B. Brazier contributed a second. According to him, a number of farmers in his region incurred substantial financial losses as a result of mistakes made by Land Commission employees. The resolution received unanimous support.

The National Executive unequivocally embraced the recommendation that forming a coalition with any other political party in order to participate in local government elections was ill-advised. Candidates affiliated with the Farmers' Union were to exclusively advocate for the interests of the ratepayers, disregarding specific political affiliations. The resolution put forth by the Ballincollig branch asserted that, given the Executive's ambiguous stance on tariffs, it was imperative to establish standing orders and regulations to regulate deliberations pertaining to significant policies during Executive gatherings. The Standing Committee was tasked with addressing the matter and delivering a report prior to the subsequent Executive meeting.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

A notice of motion, submitted by Mr. Brooke Brazier of Shanagarry, was scheduled for discussion at the subsequent meeting. The motion argued that in light of the urgent requirement to protect agricultural products and the government's imposition of protective tariffs on manufactured goods, the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union ought to scrutinise the Irish Farmers' Union's recent declaration endorsing foreign trade as their policy. The motion requests that this declaration be rescinded by Congress at its forthcoming meeting. On behalf of his branch, Mr. D. Hurley (Douglas) argued that immediate action was required due to the current state of the direct swine shipping programme. There was a prevailing belief that the system lacked perfection and that county farmers were not sufficiently apprised of the potential advantages that can be gained from utilising the apparatus instituted by the Executive. Upon receiving notification that the Shipping body had been called into session for the afternoon, the Executive decided to suggest that the Shipping body review the proposal put forth by Mr. Hurley.

In a resolution submitted for Executive approval, the Co. Kilkenny Farmers' Association requested that a committee be formed to conduct an inquiry into the postal and telegraphic services in rural regions of the Saorstát. Throughout the discourse, a number of complaints were voiced regarding the perceived inadequate standard of the postal service in the county's rural regions. It was suggested that copies of the resolution should be delivered to President Cosgrave and the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, as proposed by the chairman. A motion in favour was granted.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The chief engineer from the Local Government Department would be visiting the county to discuss local roads, the Secretary informed the audience. Furthermore, it was stated that a multitude of county organisations had elected representatives to voice their stances on this matter. The Chairman declared that a substantial portion of the funding for road maintenance was contributed by the Farmers' Union. Consequently, they were extremely interested in speaking with the engineer about the matter; on the following Monday, at the County Council offices, and he would be receptive to hearing their concerns. He suggested that a delegation attend the occasion. Mr. Ambrose suggested that the Secretary, the Chairman, and Messrs. R. Walsh and S. C. Beamish be designated as a delegation. With the support of Mr. Daly from Dungourney, the proposal was granted approval.

According to Mr O'Gorman, he had noticed an advertisement in the "Examiner" that morning which provided information regarding an increase in fees for livestock transportation. He held the view that it was incumbent upon the government to ensure that the agricultural sector was not subjected to further tariffs on an already burdensome trade. He proposed that the Executive of the Cork Farmers Union raise the issue of excessive transportation rates for agricultural products and livestock exported from Ireland to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture. Irish farmers were unjustly burdened, he asserted, by the impracticability of large-scale farming and the need to compete on the global market in England due to these rates. Kilbrittain resident Mr. Ryan contributed a second. The discussion concluded with the proposition being approved after it was disclosed that railway and transportation fees would have a substantial effect on producers.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Following the resolution of routine matters, the participants conveyed their appreciation to Mr. O'Gorman for his leadership, and the meeting subsequently came to a close.

According to a newspaper article from December 1924, the secretary of a local branch of the Cork Farmers' Union penned the following on December 16th:—

"I beg to inform you that my executive met on Saturday to deliberate on the enclosed resolution. Consequently, it was determined that a conference between a deputation from my executive and your association would provide a more satisfactory forum for discussing the matter. If your association is kind enough to grant an opportunity, three representatives have been appointed to confer. I look forward to receiving your prompt response. If your association is in agreement with organising a conference, please specify the time and location for it."

"Seeing as the practice of withholding 'luck money' at fairs is a recurring cause of dissatisfaction and financial loss, and frequently culminates in conflicts between cattle purchasers and farmers, it is prudent to either establish a specific threshold for 'luck' or completely eliminate the tradition."

Mr Collins stated that this practice had persisted since the beginning of time, as the oldest members of the trade, and they (the cattle purchasers) had no intention of abandoning it now, since they themselves were required to offer "luck money" to their English clients. Furthermore, purchasers possessed a valid right, which was recognised throughout the entirety of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Three committee members were designated to engage in consultations with the Farmers' Union representatives.

The hon. secretary was instructed to notify Mr. Cussen, the Cork Farmers' Union hon. secretary, in writing of the association's intention to designate a deputation and that he would be duly informed of the conference's time and location.

The Department of Lands and Agriculture issued an abstract circular concerning the quantity of disease-infected animals (specifically, swine, sheep, and cattle) during the years 1921, 1922, 1923, and 1924. The delegates held the opinion that the annual impact on animals was minimal. Spine fever, sheep dermatitis, and parasitic mange are the most prevalent maladies. Mr. Collins expressed his contentment with the report and was ecstatic to learn that the Department was reawakening the County Councils to their responsibilities regarding the Sheep Dipping Order. Thousands of sheep would be infected with sheep scab this year due to the rainy season if not for the Department. He believed that the secretary should be instructed to write to the Department emphasising the importance of strictly enforcing the Dipping Order, as it was then the only method of combating sheep scab. The Chairman stated that he believed it prudent to have the hon. secretary compose the document, as suggested by Mr. Collins; consequently, this course of action was approved.

A vote of condolence was proposed by Mr. Dillon to Mrs. Lucey, Kilfinane, in regard to the passing of her daughter. The vote was seconded by Mr. J. Collins and approved unanimously with the support of all those present.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

On December 17, 1924, the 'Cork Examiner' published a letter authored by John Dineen TD, of East Cork, in which he harshly criticised Mr. Brooke Wellington Brasier, a prominent farmer, active CFU committee member, and organiser. It was stated in the lengthy letter that:

"Dear Sir, I have been made aware of a statement that has surfaced in your columns, which asserts that I have failed to renege on the commitments I made during the General Election regarding the imposition of a tariff on foreign barley and malt imports. Certain members of my support base have implored me to clarify my endeavours to fulfil the commitments I have made to them. Doing so would enable me to confront my prejudiced detractors and adversaries. Truly, I made a sincere commitment to farmers residing in specific districts of East Cork that I would advocate for the implementation of a tax on foreign barley or malt, fully intending to fulfil that commitment.

With this perspective, I intended to conduct the inaugural meeting of the Farmers' Party or National Executive of the Farmers' Union in September 1923 to deliberate on the barley issue. As the matter was too significant to hastily deliberate and could potentially have far-reaching consequences, the majority voted to postpone it until the following meeting. The principal impediment to the reduction in rates, freights, salaries, or wages was the apprehension that it might pave the way for tariffs on other essential items of life, thereby increasing the cost of living. I advocated for the resolution of the issue at the subsequent meeting in Dublin, representing a district where the primary industry was barley cultivation, which provided the greatest income for farmers. The East Cork Farmers' Union presented me with resolutions advocating for the safeguarding of the domestically produced item. However, time was not sufficient

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

for the meeting to reach a decision. It was deferred until a subsequent meeting, during which the prevailing consensus determined that proceeding with it would not be prudent. Some individuals from the oat-growing regions asserted that oat exports increased and that retaliation was possible. They exhibited a predilection for free trade until they acquired additional knowledge or experience.

I immediately submitted the following question to the Minister for Agriculture after the second meeting subsequent to the 1923 election failed to reach a decision: "Is he cognisant of the fact that high wages, wet seasons, and unfavourable markets render barley cultivation an uneconomical venture? Furthermore, is he cognisant of the yearly decline in cultivated acreage and the importation of foreign-grown barley, which detracts from the domestic product? Is it intended to encourage distillers to breeze As I understood it, my party was dissatisfied with the query out of concern that it could spark an unwarranted debate or cause them to reconsider their position on tariffs. However, I was merely an individual. As they were in attendance at the convention where I was elected in Cork, certain East Cork farmers, representatives of their unions, or branches must be aware that I was required to take a pledge to sit, act, and vote with the majority of the Farmers' Party, just as the Government and Labour Party do when a whip is installed.

It is unlikely that any intelligent, industrious farmer from East Cork would have claimed that they begged to be excused from their vow in order to vote alongside the free trade farmers upon their return to their constituency. As per the terms of my written commitment, I was obligated to adhere to their policy in the same way that the branch managed by Mr. Brook Brasier, of which he serves as secretary, would be impolite to the National Executive of the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Farmers' Union in order to maintain its legal status as a union or branch. Last May, in Midleton, the East Cork Executive Farmers' Union convened a meeting at which both Mr. O'Gorman and Mr. Heffernan were in attendance and delivered speeches. Despite his origins in a renowned oat-growing region, Mr. O'Gorman ardently supports free trade in the interest of the farmers. At that time, Mr. Heffernan expressed his opposition to taxes by stating that establishing them for his country was a poor idea. Subsequently, he spoke out vehemently against the tax on marmalade, footwear, and other similar items. He articulated his viewpoint that the rationale for imposing a tariff on imported barley was considerably more compelling. The subject would be deliberated upon during the upcoming Farmers' Congress scheduled for the following spring.

At that meeting, I articulated the stance I was obligated to adopt, and I sincerely believed it had been accepted. Regarding the situation, Mr. Heffernan expressed his belief that the Party might be able to absolve me of my vow, but he did so as an individual Party member. In contemporary Ireland, a statesmanlike endeavour would be to unify the agricultural and rural forces of the country, whose interests are inextricably linked (they were unified during conscription) in order to reconcile or narrow the gap between the producer and the consumer.

The town or city organiser is unable to increase the wages of agricultural labourers by referencing the wages in the city or town. This is because when a merchant or shopkeeper enthusiastically increases wages, they are compelled to raise the costs of essential necessities. As a result, country farmers and labourers are obligated to pay these costs without earning a commensurate profit, unlike urban residents. It was implied that I received ballots in exchange for making a

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

specific pledge to secure my election. It was unexpectedly modest in percentage, voters for the farmers' candidate, to come in and cast their ballots in the region of the country where the issue is most significant. According to letters to the "Examiner" in which Mr. Brasier was quoted as saying, the candidate who pledged to support the tariff on imported barley was elected, whereas highly qualified individuals who supported free trade failed to secure election. There are occasions when sincerity of intent takes precedence over exceptional capability. Mr. Brasier advocated for the causes of open commerce."

As recorded by the 'Cork Examiner,' Mr. E. Neville, chairman, presided over the County Cork Executive of the Irish Farmers' Union's annual meeting in February 1925. According to the secretary's report, the number of chapters affiliated with the association has decreased from 121 in 1921 to 87 in 1924. Yet, there was compelling evidence of a significant resurgence in interest regarding the association, as numerous farmers who had neglected to renew their memberships last year did so subsequently, and many who had not joined the union previously become paid members. From June 1st, when the organisation was re-established, until March 25th of last year, when Mr. W. J. Fahy resigned as secretary, the association experienced a severe decline in its financial situation. Although brief in duration, that pause had played a role in the development of apathy, a sentiment that had proven to be difficult to eradicate.

During the June meeting of the executive board the previous year, a decision was made to initiate a collective purchasing initiative on behalf of the union members. Additionally, a resolution was reached to suggest the establishment of co-operative societies in areas lacking

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

such organisations, in order to facilitate such purchasing. Later, it came to light that the I.A.O.S. disapproved of such societies conducting liquid trades with such a tiny capital to support them. In order to eliminate the necessity for such intermediaries, a central purchasing agency was established at the executive headquarters. The collective procurement of coal commenced on August 19th of that year. Since then, through the end of the year, approximately 5,700 tonnes had been distributed among members. A quantity of 1,300 tonnes of basic materials was purchased and subsequently disseminated in the same manner. The terms of a contract for the supply of superphosphate were even more favourable in comparison to the price reductions that merchants had experienced due to the actions of the union. A highly advantageous contract had been executed for the provision of food items to our members. As an illustration, members were now able to purchase Indian meal at wholesale prices of £1 per tonne. Kainite and sulphate of ammonia had been procured under contract; however, substantial reductions were not achievable as a result of their inability to establish substantial quantity specifications for those manures. Since the opening of a second coal contract, values were more favourable than they were in the first. Immediate action, it was suggested, was required to establish a system for the consistent distribution of membership credentials. Their issuance was then susceptible to abuse and misconduct; if this was not rectified immediately, a card's moral value would be substantially diminished.

During this time, a growing number of individuals grew to recognise the significance of the union, and it was only through the active participation of every member of the executive and standing committee that the Co. Cork association would become a genuinely dynamic institution.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The hon. secretary, in his remarks on the annual report, urged the assembled members to make every effort to bring their branch lists up to the level of 1921, when virtually every farmer in the county was a member. The current issues remained just as significant as they were back then, and each individual should have been made aware that he was suffering greatly and was a source of loss for the farming community as a whole; that he had both rights and responsibilities, and must have understood the operation of one and the application of the other.

Later, the Chairman made reference to the prevailing economic downturn in the agricultural sector and its consequential impact on the nation's commerce. According to him, indications were emerging that they had reached the lowest point, and farmers were once more making progress in their recovery from the adverse years. However, he believed, greater unity for the greater good would substantially facilitate recovery. He proposed that the report of the secretary be adopted. With the support of Senator Linehan, the report was approved.

On Senator Linehan's motion, the statement of accounts and financial report prepared by Mr. Beamish were also unanimously approved.

The chairman, Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, declared that he had an urgent matter to discuss. Recently, he had participated in a deputation to the County Council where he represented the Union and requested that the Council road initiative, which required a £200,000 loan and would be transferred to the new County Council, be delayed. The-then current Council was not exerting much effort to hold accountable those responsible for the majority of the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

damage. He suggested that the Local Government Department be duly informed by the Secretary regarding the Union's objection to the scheme, which was supported by particular reasons. With the support of Mr. B. Brazier, the proposition was approved.

Mr. Cronin (Charleville) put forth the following proposal:

"That we, the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, along with delegates representing the various branches of the association in the county, convene in general assembly as a united body, bearing in mind the Union's founding purpose of fostering and advancing the common good, and recognising that the upcoming County Council elections would serve as a true litmus test of our competence in this regard, and that we have learned from past experience that unity signifies strength."

Mr. O'Callaghan (Skibbereen) voiced his opposition to the fusion of interests with any political organisation. He stated that the Farmers' Union should contest County Council elections solely to secure representation for the ratepayers, and that political matters should be kept outside the County Council chamber. Politics have impeded the Council's lawful operations for far too long, but the resolution was defeated unanimously.

Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, who was subsequently elected chairman, presided over the March 1925 Executive meeting of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union. The Secretary of the East Cork District branch of the Farmers' Union, submitting a resolution that was unanimously approved at a meeting of his Association on the 7th instant, stated:

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

"Our position is that there should be no Local Government Board Elections in the County. Instead, a Commissioner should be appointed for a specified period of time; and estimated expenses shall be incurred accordingly."

Mr. O'Riordan, Millstreet, said that even a 'Council of Angels' could scarcely successfully administer the Council's affairs after the current Council had finished with them. He felt that only a man without fear or bias could now bring the necessary spirit to straighten out matters and give the ratepayers value for their money. He moved the adoption of the motion. The Chairman said that a similar resolution was adopted by the Executive at its meeting in November 1923, and it was forwarded to the Minister for Local Government, but nothing more was heard of it. He suggested that the Minister's attention should now be directed to that resolution, and a reply insisted upon. He agreed with Mr. O'Riordan that it would be an almost impossible task for a new body to clear up the mess resulting from years of maladministration and that a Commissioner devoting his whole time would find the task very challenging. Mr. T. Mannix (Charleville) spoke, and the Chairman's suggestion was unanimously adopted, with the Secretary accordingly instructed.

Suggestions were put forward in a communication from the English Country Gentlemen's Association for an arrangement between the Executive and that Association for the direct shipment of cattle to selected centres in England for sale by public auction. The letter mentioned that under a similar scheme in operation in County Waterford since September of the previous year, upwards of 3,000 animals had been disposed of at an estimated average profit of £2 5s. per head, after payment of expenses, over prices in the markets at home. Sellers and

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

buyers had been brought into direct contact to their mutual advantage. The Country Gentlemen's Association, composed largely of buyers of Irish cattle, was keen to get their cattle in the best possible condition, and they believed the suggested arrangements would enable them to do so. The Secretary reported that a representative of the C.G.A. had attended a meeting of the standing committee on the previous Thursday, detailed the scheme, and that an agent was about to be appointed. On appointment, representations from the executive would be carefully considered, and the agent would further confer with the standing committee as to steps to be taken to work the scheme if approved by the executive. Senator Linehan proposed that the standing committee be empowered to carry on negotiations on the subject. Mr. D. Lynch seconded, and the motion was passed.

The deputation that met the cattle trade association on the matter of "luck money" at fairs reported through Mr. O'Leary (Clondrohid) that the deputation had only been able to extract the admission that every seller had a right to receive the full agreed price and to give whatever he liked as luck. Mr. O'Leary said that the deputation had pointed out to the cattle trade representatives that the seller's right was too often ignored and innocent farmers were imposed upon. Mr. Lucy (Aghina) said that small farmers were harder hit by the withholding of a large slice of the purchase money as "luck" than the rich farmers who sold high-priced cattle. He believed the Executive gave scant attention to the trials of the small farmer. He proposed that a scale of "luck money" be decided upon and adhered to in all branches, and that the cattle trade be informed that farmers would insist on being the primary consideration in cattle deals. Mr. Mannix (Charleville) suggested an amendment to the motion, as he said the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

practice of "luck money" was immemorial and could not be governed by rigid rules. He moved that the secretary communicate with the cattle trade association, pointing out abuses and asking for a written assurance on the terms given by the trade representatives in conference. Mr. Coakley seconded, and Mr. Lucy, having withdrawn in favour, Mr. Mannix's motion was passed unanimously.

The meeting was informed that the standing committee, in a Thursday meeting attended by fourteen members, had put forth the following recommendations for adoption by the executive:

- "1. Appoint an auxiliary organiser under conditions to be determined by the executive.*
- 2. Membership cards issued in 1924 shall be revoked on June 1, 1924, and replacement cards shall be issued thereafter with validity until December 31, 1924; going forward, the date of issuance for all cards shall be January 1, annually.*
- 3. Request that every member contribute an extra 3d to the £5 P.L.V., with the branch secretaries receiving the additional 3d based on the amount collected in each branch.*
- 4. Expenses incurred by branches shall not exceed 25% of the branch contribution of £1 in the £5 P.L.V. in locations beyond a 12-mile radius from the city, and 15% within that radius. Delegates' expenses shall be included in these expenses."*

The secretary proceeded to provide an explanation of the reasoning behind the standing committee's decisions with regard to the first recommendation. It was supported by Mr. Slyne, Messrs. Hegarty (Rathcormac), Walker (Kinsale), and Buckley (Lyre). However, Senator Linehan expressed the view that the Executive branch's current

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

financial situation did not permit such an appointment, and he suggested that the appointment be deferred for a period of six months. Mr. Ambrose concurred with this proposition. Mr. Coakley put forth the proposition that the recommendation be rescheduled instead.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, it was determined that the topic should be examined in great depth by the standing committee, and a report should be drafted on it so that a final decision may be reached at the subsequent Executive meeting. Following the adoption of the suggestion made by the standing committee in accordance with Paragraph 2, an addition was included stating that branches were to make their own arrangements to deal with challenges that arise as a result of the new order. Following a unanimous vote, the Executive Committee came to the conclusion that the suggestion in Paragraph 3 should be conveyed to the branches for their view, which would then be presented at the subsequent Executive meeting. In a subsequent unanimous vote, recommendation Number Four was accepted.

In order to present their plan for the elimination of income tax to the Co. Executive, a delegation from the Cork Chamber of Commerce was present at the meeting. The delegation, which included Messrs. Dowdall, Daly, and Dinan, engaged in debate for a considerable amount of time. On the other hand, a great number of farmers were required to go in order to catch their trains, and it was hard to discern the Executive's viewpoint of the matter. In addition to expressing his belief that the matter was deserving of considerable examination, Mr. Dowdall said that he and his colleagues would be delighted to participate in a special meeting of the Executive to discuss the issues that were brought up.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The following is an excerpt from an editorial that was published in the "Cork Examiner" in July 1925:

"The claim of the agricultural industry for direct representation on the Cork Harbour Board, which was mentioned at a meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union on Saturday, is indisputable." Currently, the only thing that has to be answered is how the representatives are going to be selected. Up until this point, the County Council had nominated a few members, and the Corporation had chosen those representatives. However, it did not necessarily follow that the individuals who were selected were farmers in any meaning of the term. Considering that the farmers are now the most powerful organised party in the Council and that some of the "independents" are also farmers, it should not be difficult for them to pick members who are practical agriculturists for the full quota that is permitted. On the other hand, the agricultural sector of the county has the ability to make a compelling argument for more representation on the Board. They are responsible for the majority of the imports and the majority of the exports that are produced. In the absence of the countryside, the amount of income that the Harbour Board obtains from the commerce that occurs inside the city region would not be sufficient to keep the port operational for an extended period of time. As a distributing station, Cork is thriving, and the producers and consumers of the goods that are dispersed, whether they are sent outside or inward, have the same right to representation as the dealers."

Another editorial on the CFU that was published in the "Cork Examiner" in October 1925, opined that:

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

"There was sound common sense in the resolution passed on Saturday by the Executive Council of the County Cork Farmers' Union, asking their central authority in Dublin to approach the Government with a request that a conference may at once take place between the Executive of the Union and the Government to shape the agricultural policy of the country,"

This particular editorial was also written about the CFU. It suggested that a resolution of this kind would not be required in any other nation besides Ireland, which is dependent on agriculture for its economic life. This is because the government of any other nation would have already invited the representatives of agriculture to state exactly what they wanted and would have acted on it, regardless of the opinions of 'amateur' economists.

It argued that also, in any other nation with circumstances that are comparable to those of Ireland, agricultural representatives would constitute the majority of the members of Parliament and would have at least a substantial presence on the Executive. There was no denying the fact, it stated, that the agricultural sector accounted for at least seven tenths of the existing population. Everyone who worked in agriculture, including farmers, cottiers, and agricultural labourers, was intimately connected to the soil. In addition to this, there were a significant number of business owners that were wholly reliant on them. Given the perceived affluence that existed among the people that was engaged in agriculture, there would be prosperity elsewhere. What was beneficial for farmers, it claimed, was something that nobody understood better than the farmers themselves. The typical Irish farmer, they declared, was a person of high intellect, who was acutely aware of the specific kind of farming that

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

was most appropriate for the region in which he resided. They noted that there was a large range of soil types in Ireland, and it was necessary to till some soils, whereas other soils couldn't be tilled, and other soils were more likely to be suitable for dairy farming and grazing. The fact that some of their so-called "experts" prescribed generalisations for the farmers in each and every area demonstrated, they claimed, how little knowledge theorists often had about the nation. It would be difficult to advocate for similar agricultural practices in West Cork, East Limerick, and Tipperary all at the same time, the article asserted. If a farmer from West Cork were to implement the same technique in East Limerick, he would find himself in a precarious financial situation very quickly. On the other hand, a farmer from Tipperary who relocated to West Cork would have to cultivate additional land in order to provide food for his cattle during the winter months. They said that they were not going to reject the fact that output might be doubled in the majority of the nation; nevertheless, the foundation for greater production was education that was both simultaneous more theoretical and more practical. They asked, what were the reasons for not giving agriculture and other subjects that were related to it the very same level of importance in the educational system as could be found in Denmark?

In a second resolution that was approved at the same meeting, the government was urged to reinstate the Council of Agriculture. The article suggested that an additional one of those mysteries that were unique to Ireland was the question of why the 'corpse' should have been permitted to be placed in quarantine. When the previous government was in power, agricultural representatives were granted formal status and outfitted

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

with the necessary tools to effectively communicate their perspectives to the government. Even back then, it claimed, there were indications that authoritative figures were attempting to stifle popular opinion. Additionally, there was nothing, they said, that corresponds to the Council of Agriculture under the current system, despite the fact that the Constitution expressly allowed for the establishment or creation of "vocational bodies" without the need for legislation.

The executive resolved that it was possible to make a great deal of accommodation for the period of transition, particularly for a period that was plagued by difficulties, such as the time when the Free State was established. The piece concludes that, however, these challenges had been resolved, and it was high time that in a State with a Constitution that was founded on the principle of comprehensive democracy, the people who were directly involved in the state's primary industry ought to be provided with the means to express their opinions to the government.

Again, in December of 1925, the newspaper expressed its opinion on the proposal made by the Cork Farmers' Union (CFU) regarding a "Council of Agriculture." The newspaper stated,

"While agreeing with the chairman of the meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, held on Saturday, that a Council of Agriculture for the entire Free State, centred at Dublin, would be more effective than a county organisation, we think Professor Boyle's suggestion is worthy of more consideration than it received from the meeting. We are inclined to assume that the government would find it highly desirable, if not absolutely essential, to establish a

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

National Council of Agriculture, which would consist of delegates chosen from all sections of the nation. This is a very necessary need. When it came to communicating the feelings of the nation to the Department of Agriculture that had been in place before, the old Council of Agriculture proved to be an invaluable instrument. It would seem that the newly established Department of Lands and Agriculture has permitted the Council to be put on hold, since we have not received any information on the Council being called upon to provide advice to the Department regarding any of the many issues that are associated with agriculture and need serious attention. It would be beneficial to bring attention to the necessity of a more comprehensive body to represent the opinion of the entire agricultural community of the Free State, of which Cork County could be said to represent one-eighth. This would be accomplished through the establishment of a voluntary advisory body that would consist of representatives from the Farmers' Union, the Munster Agricultural Society, and the County Committees of Agriculture.

According to our understanding, the establishment of such a body is not being recommended in any way that is hostile towards either the government or the Department of Lands and Agriculture; rather, it is being presented with the intention of being beneficial to both of these entities. From the perspective of an agriculturist, there are a great number of issues that are of critical relevance to be examined, such as education, tariffs, obligatory tillage, and so on. These issues cannot be dealt with as efficiently by a variety of institutions that operate along more or less parallel lines. It has been claimed that the suggestions of a representative Council should have greater weight than resolutions that have been approved by a number of other organisations.”

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The CFU's last meeting of the year, which was held in that month, swerved into the realm of primary school education, which was another turn of events that occurred during that previous month. At the meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, with Mr. D. L. O'Gorman presiding, the following resolution from the East Cork District branch was discussed:

"That in our opinion a grave injustice is being imposed on our children who are attending school by being compelled to learn all subjects through the medium of Irish, which is not the spoken language of the vast majority, and which would not prepare them for a place in the commercial life of the world; that such an educational policy is insular, and is likely to retard the progress of the people of the Free State, and it has not the approval of the electorate."

Mr. M. Murphy (Walshtown), in supporting the resolution, reiterated what he wrote in a letter to the East Cork Association, that:

"Nobody would object to the teaching of Irish if a proper and moderate programme were adopted, but the cramming of Irish down the throats of infant children, to the exclusion of other subjects, which would be of use to them in their career through life, was, instead of being of any benefit to the coming generation or to the Irish language, heading for confusion in education, and shoving it back 200 years, to the time when the Irishman, through being deprived of even the rudiments of learning, had to do the work of slaves and coolies in America and every other foreign country of the world. English, despite all of its flaws, is the business language of the world today; so, why would one want to deprive children of the opportunity to speak English and replace it with a language that has been rendered obsolete?"

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

There was also a lot of commotion made at the moment, and it was justified, about the fact that children were not attending school. However, there was not a single word said about the three months of the summer when they were forced to stay at home and roam around in danger. This occurred during a time when horses, maddened by flies, were being tackled under the most dangerous machinery on the farm.”

Mr. Murphy continued by stating that he did not have any objections to the teaching of Irish, given that it was done in a reasonable manner. The instructors, who were unable to deviate from the plan that had been laid out for them, were not the subject of any of his reflections. The fact that the item was almost completely incorrect, he claimed, was obvious to everyone who had any expertise in education. He also opined that the individuals who were responsible for this movement were reducing the opportunities available to youngsters and causing harm to the Irish language.

Mr. Brazier said that the resolution was accepted at the East Cork District branch meeting, with just one person expressing disagreement with it. The individuals who had approved of it were men who had participated in the National Struggle, who were competent in Irish, and who were the fathers of families. On the other hand, they were opposed to the practice of instructing common topics in Irish to young children who were not yet completely fluent in the language. Teaching a youngster how to think was one of the basic fundamentals of education that was taught to children. Would it be feasible, he queried, for a youngster who spoke one language outside of school and another language inside of school to be able to think about the many topics that are outside of school, such as mathematics, grammar, geography, and other things, in a

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

language that they were not acquainted with? In order to escape Ireland in a period of hardship, many of them had to go to other countries where Irish was not spoken. Education had a significant role in the policies of other countries, and if children from Ireland who were forced to leave their country, and were unable to adapt to the culture of other countries or were not as well educated, it believed that it would mean that they would fall farther behind in the race. Additionally, he wished to make it very apparent that the resolution did not raise any objections to the instruction of Irish. He insisted that it was a straightforward request that pupils not be taught in the standard subjects via the medium of Irish.

In spite of the fact that Mr. Crowley was in agreement that the language ought to be disseminated by all means available to them, he acknowledged that they would never be able to do so unless the parents had already acquired a working knowledge of it. However, according to Mr. Farrell (Ballincollig), there was now no need to be concerned about the situation. According to the youngsters, they were not being taught in any topic using Irish as the medium of instruction. At the time that the national school system was established, the majority of the population spoke Irish. The English government mandated that teachers teach the children English, which led to the students becoming fluent in English. At that time, the majority of the population spoke English. He was of the opinion that the Farmers' Union had to be very specific about the policy that it was going to implement in relation to the issue. If it voted against the spirit of the nation, it may end up losing a significant amount of support throughout the nation. As a result of their desire to bring in new members to the Union, they needed, he claimed, to exercise caution. The youngsters who were attending the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

schools and studying Irish and English were particularly happy with how they were doing, according to Mr. J. W. Leahy (Mallow), who said that the children were making progress. They were, he suggested, on the verge of developing their own independent thought processes and had no objections to studying Irish. They were being instructed in a high-spirited manner. On the other hand, he would not be in support of teaching all topics via the medium of Irish. However, Leahy also believed that the-then current system should be maintained, which consisted of teaching both English and Irish together, and that this would not in any way slow down the educational development of the students. As we know in the world of 2024, this approach prevailed.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE

MEETINGS 1926-1928: NEW

CHALLENGES

The leading members of the Cork Farmers' Union met in January 1926 to debate protective tariffs. Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, the Chairman of the Union, made the argument that protective tariffs led to a rise in prices, which in turn led to an increase in the cost of living, and that they were beneficial to the country. It was his assertion that the purpose of tariffs was to increase income. In support of increasing the amount of grain that is tilled, Mr. O'Gorman pointed out that if additional acres were planted with grain, it would result in the employment of workers at a rate of thirty pounds per week. In response to the concerns raised by growers, Mr. Bergin said that they could not have any prospect of having anything done for them as long as they had a government in power whose very every pound was invested in Guinness's stock. According to the 'Cork Examiner,' he did not claim that every member of the government had money invested in that venture. However, he did state that a prominent member of the Executive Council sold more than one public house at long prices at the time that the National Loan was on the market. He then invested his money in Guinness's.

There were around fifty delegates present at the meeting of the Executive of the County Cork Farmers' Union that took place in April of 1926, according to the report that was published in the "Cork Examiner." Mr. R. H. Beamish TD, a member of the Dáil, addressed the gathering in respect to the planned cattle market for Cork City, detailing all of the particulars of the proposal. His remarks

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

highlighted the critical significance of the matter to each and every farmer, and he detailed the advantages of locating the market in close proximity to the Show Grounds. Although the G.S.W.R. had guaranteed the existence of railway lines, this assurance was reliant on the market being established. Mister Beamish brought attention to the low interest rates and the predicted growth in the value of cattle while discussing the financial situation. He gave his word that the market would not compete with the fairs that were already in place, but it would provide an extra channel for the trading of cattle. A resolution was sponsored by Mr. Beamish that expressed support for the market, with the condition that the requisite money be obtained within a period of six months. A unanimous vote was taken to approve the resolution.

A statement from the Dublin County Committee of Agriculture was read out, asking members from each Agricultural Committee and Ratepayers' Organisation in each county to attend an Agricultural Congress. The communication was written in reference to the Agricultural Congress. Topics such as agriculture, land acquisition, tariffs, and other related topics were included on the agenda. The recommendation to refrain from participation owing to insulting statements made by Mr. Patrick Belton, the chairman of the committee, was adopted by all members of the committee unanimously. A request for slips from cows in Co. Cork and Co. Kerry was made by the Kilkenny Farmers' Union, which had shown interest in the matter. There was a discussion on the quote that Mr. Dring offered, but it was not completed. According to the financial report, the association was in a healthy financial situation, as shown by the fact that expenditures have decreased while revenues have grown in comparison to the previous year.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

This is Mr. J. Cashman from Co. Wicklow expressed his disapproval of the agricultural education system, stating that it was inefficient, since it did not make sufficient use of the available resources. Following that, a discussion was held on the deficiencies of the educational policy, during which proposals were made to enhance both efficiency and accountability. During the conference, a number of different agricultural topics were discussed, with a particular focus placed on the need of enhancing education, infrastructure, and market accessibility for the advancement of farmers.

In an editorial published in June 1926, the 'Evening Echo' expressed its disapproval of the Waterford farmers' association and contrasted it with the CFU organisations. In this story, the farmers of County Waterford were portrayed as a group that was considered to be somewhat retrograde. In the text, it was highlighted that the Co. Waterford executive did not accept a proposal that was presented to them by the Cork Farmers' Union. The proposal concerned the formation of provincial executives within the farmers' organisation. Not only did the Co. Waterford executive team choose not to support the concept, but they also took a stance that was strongly opposed to it. As a result of the inability to understand the historical importance of having its own governance institutions in Munster, the article claimed that the research concluded that Co. Waterford did not possess a spirit of autonomy. It would seem, it suggested that there was a reluctance to accept devolution, which may have been described as the process of acquiring power from other bodies. The existing type of centralised government was criticised in the paper, which advocated for decentralised administrations instead. A decentralised

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

administration would, it claimed, enable each area to handle its own affairs individually. In addition, the paper makes the case that the local government should include both the mechanism of somewhat suppressing critics, and the mechanism of rewarding supporters. This paper suggested that providing posts inside institutions that had been attacked was an effective technique of suppressing opposition, while providing assistance to sympathisers guaranteed that administrative success was achieved. The end of this paper expressed apparent sadness at Waterford's decision to reject the plan for provincial executives. The report cited this decision as a squandered chance for more autonomy and local empowerment within the farmers' organisation.

The Chairman of the CFU commenced the meeting in June 1926 under sombre and melancholy circumstances, as chronicled by the 'Evening Echo.' This was in response to the recent passing of Mr. H. Drew Walker, a former treasurer and valuable member of the organisation, who was noted for his apparent commitment and selflessness. The dedication that Mr. Walker shown towards the Farmers' Union was really remarkable, according to the Chairman, as seen by the persistent work and generous donations that he had made. A resolution was presented by the Chairman to communicate to Mr. Walker's family his profound condolences for his untimely passing, expressing his deepest sympathies following the death. A unanimous vote was taken to approve the resolution, which was seconded and supported by members. In addition, Mr. Twomey and Captain Clarke both expressed sympathies with regard to the losses that they had experienced.

On the agenda existed debates on the establishment of provincial councils, which was a topic that had been

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

discussed at the Executive meeting in the past. In their correspondence, the Waterford County Committee and the Limerick County Committee expressed contrasting opinions over the idea. The Chairman, despite his initial doubts, made a commitment to support the decision that was reached by the majority of the members participating at the national level. The Secretary presented information on railway accommodations, which had been reintroduced after an earlier withdrawal, in relation to the Royal Show that was held at Reading. In addition, the particulars of the excursion, such as the prices of transportation and lodging, were disclosed.

The position that the Executive had taken on the practice of cross-voting by members of the County Council was a significant subject that was included on the agenda. The decision to strengthen the resolution that was voted at the meeting on March 27th was reported by the Secretary, who also reported on the debates that took place inside the Standing Committee. With the passage of this resolution, the representatives of the Farmers' Party in the County Council were asked to advocate against certain budgetary measures. In order to strengthen the cohesiveness of the party, the Committee underlined how important it is for members to keep the commitments they have made and declared that they want to make the resolution public. After receiving queries, the Secretary revealed that there were instances of members breaking their vows, which prompted the Executive to take a tough position on preserving the ideals of the party. Following the conclusion of the conference, a pledge was made to maintain the integrity of the party and to assist members in completing their electoral commitments.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

In the meeting that took place in July in the Lecture Hall of the School of Art in Cork, the Chairman of the Cork Executive, Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, gave a speech to the assembly in which he discussed the recent sale of the National Land Bank. Mr. Smith Gordon, the manager of the bank, had written a letter that was published in the "Irish Times" about a claimed loss on land transactions that amounted to around £36,000. He made reference to this letter. Discrepancies in recent debates in the Dáil on the activities of the Land Bank were cited as the reason for the Chairman's scepticism over the authenticity of this claimed loss. Additional concerns were raised as a result of Mr. Blythe's disclosure that a corporation managed by a single person, who also happened to be a Senator, was awarded a fifty thousand pound advance. Particularly in view of the fact that the Bank of Ireland was planning to acquire the bank in the near future, the Chairman raised concerns about the availability of information on such deals. The planned superannuation allowances for then-current Land Bank employees were challenged by him, and he brought attention to the differences between them and the basic benefits offered by the public service.

Moving on to a different subject, the Chairman discussed the incentives that are given to officials working for local governments, providing instances of bonuses that are excessive in comparison to their wages. The proof of exorbitant institutional spending was to be sent to the Minister for Local Government for consideration, according to his proposal. The Chairman encouraged a closer look at public spending, drawing attention to the fact that the trade in cattle exports and the receipt of deposits had both decreased. The members expressed their agreement with the need of fiscal responsibility, especially

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

in light of recent discoveries about the activities of the Land Bank and the larger economic situation.

The subsequent conversations focused on a variety of complaints, such as the weight of taxes, unpaid annuities, and the greater economic difficulties that farmers were experiencing. In a manner that echoed the emotions of accountability that were voiced by members, the Chairman highlighted the need of budgetary responsibility. Following the conclusion of the meeting's discussions on this subject, a move was made by the Chairman, which was supported by Mr. Sullivan. The motion was to send proof of excessive institutional spending to the Minister for Local Government. With unanimous agreement, the meeting came to a conclusion. After that, the group decided to have a committee meeting in order to review the preparations that were being made for the next general election.

It was reported by the 'Cork Examiner' that Mr. W. Fahy, who was the Chairman of the Mallow Branch of the Cork Farmers' Union, presided over a local meeting that took place in August. In his presentation, Mr. V. Lynch, the secretary, discussed the new restrictions that pertained to the transportation of pigs. All submissions were needed to be filed in Cork city on the Saturday before the shipments were first scheduled to take place. It was said that regular shipments would take place from Cork every Wednesday. To pay the costs of travelling from Cork to Birkenhead, the admission form was accompanied by a fee of ten pounds six pence. Participants lost the 10s 6d fee if they choose to withdraw from the competition after it had been submitted. It was stressed by Mr. Lynch that the pigs that were suited for transportation required to be large animals, which were not conveniently accessible in Cork at the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

moment. At Birmingham, the greatest weight that was considered acceptable was less than three quarters of a pound and fourteen pounds, and the cost per person was six pounds and thirteen cents. The Chairman and the other members all agreed that there was an immediate need for consistent supplies.

Following that, the selling of Irish cattle in England was the next item on the agenda. The success of previous cattle auctions in England was underlined in a letter that was sent out by Mr. R. Dring, a shipping agent for the Cork Farmers' Union. Additionally, the communication revealed that there would be a series of fall sales organised. There was a further discussion discussing the numerous deals that were mentioned, and several of the members expressed their intention to take part in the sales. A commitment had been made by Mr. Dring to provide advice on the selection of animals that are fit for transportation. Mr. O'Hanlon expressed his worry on the lack of coal, especially in light of the fact that the threshing season is about to begin. A strong emphasis was placed on the fact that prompt action was required in order to guarantee a sufficient supply to meet the requirements of the season. Following the passage of a resolution, the executive branch was urged to work together with farmers in the south in order to make arrangements for a shipment of coal to be delivered to each region in preparation for the forthcoming threshing season.

On Saturday of the next week, Mr. D. L. O'Gorman presided over the August meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, which took place in the School of Art. The Executive's letter from the 22nd of August was read in response to a letter from the Department of Local Government regarding the cost of living bonus that was

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

paid to Local Government officials in the Saorstat. Additionally, a cutting from the "Cork Examiner" of the 14th was read, which detailed the contract prices for certain commodities that were supplied to the North Infirmary in Cork. These rates were included in a quarterly contract for a year, which was normally the time of year when food costs were at their lowest. The Department of Agriculture made this observation. Their focus was placed on the fact that wholesale prices were not the same as retail prices, and that contract prices were seen as unusual and did not accurately represent the prices of the general public. Because of this, there was no direct comparison made between the changes in retail pricing and the changes in contract prices for a particular institution over the same time period under consideration. The statement that was sent with the message provided an illustration of the average prices of major agricultural goods that were sold at fairs and markets in the Saorstat. Additionally, the statement included prices for store cattle and store sheep for the year 1925, and it compared these prices to the average prices for the three years that spanned from 1911 to 1913. The Department emphasised that the percentage rise in these prices was much larger than the 20 percent increase that was specified in the letter that was sent by the Farmers' Executive. This news prompted a significant amount of commentary.

Again, Mr. D. L. O'Gorman presided over the September meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, which took place at the School of Art. The meeting was a very contentious event, as reported by the "Southern Star." During the meeting, a letter was read from the Department of Local Government in response to the Executive's letter from the 27th of the month, which was about the cost of living bonus that was paid to Local

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Government officials in the Saorstat. Additionally, a cutting from the "Cork Examiner" on the 14th of the month was presented, which detailed the contract prices for certain commodities that were supplied to the North Infirmary in Cork. These rates were included in a quarterly contract for a year, which is normally the time of year when food costs are at their lowest. The Department of Agriculture made this observation. Their focus was placed on the fact that wholesale prices were not the same as retail prices, and that contract prices were seen as unusual and did not accurately represent the prices of the general public. Because of this, there was no direct comparison between the changes that occurred over a period of years in contract pricing for a particular institution and the changes that occurred in retail prices over the same period of time.

The letter was accompanied by a statement that summarised the average prices of important agricultural goods that were sold at fairs and markets in the Saorstat. Additionally, the statement included the prices of store cattle and store sheep for the year 1925, and it compared these prices to the average prices for the three years that spanned from 1911 to 1913. The Department of Agriculture emphasised that the percentage rise in these prices was far more than the twenty percent increase that was reported in the letter from the Farmers' Executive. During the meeting, the Chairman suggested that a response be drafted to the Department, in which the Executive would voice their disagreement with each and every item in the table of pricing. He advised incorporating information from the Dublin market for the 24th and 20th of August 1926, in addition to the Department's own pricing report, in order to defend their position against the bonus. With regard to the Food Prices

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Tribunal, he gave the Secretary the instruction to collect contract prices from a variety of organisations, highlighting the significance of these prices as indications of market values. He then addressed issues of loyalty within the Farmers' Party, referring to a letter sent by Mr. M. R. Heffernan, President of the Farmers' Party. Regarding the comments made by Deputy D. Vaughan, the Secretary of the Farmers' Party makes statements. During the course of the conversation, the question of whether or not Vaughan's views were in line with the policies of the party was brought up. Several members voiced their discontent with his statements. The Chairman highlighted the need of being clear and being faithful to the ideas that the party stood for.

Eventually, a resolution pushing for a decrease in the number of members in An Dáil was brought up for discussion. This resolution was proposed by the East Cork District branch. Although there were members who voiced their worries about the possible effects on the Farmers' Party's representation, there were other members who viewed it as a chance to improve efficiency and save costs. The Chairman brought attention to the fact that representatives were absent from their positions and argued that having fewer members may result in more efficient government.

In 1927, the 'Southern Star' kept a record of an extremely exciting annual general meeting of the CFU. A Saturday seemed to be the day when the County Cork Farmers' Union Executive got together for their annual meeting, which took place at the Imperial Hotel in Cork city. There was a fairly large number of delegates present, and Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, who was the Chairman, presided over the meeting. Mr. Slyne sent a letter in which he campaigned

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

for the Executive meetings to be held on Thursdays rather than Saturdays. He did this in order to take advantage of the discounted train rates that are available to delegates. Additionally, he wanted to provide delegates with the chance to go shopping in Cork, since the majority of the business houses in Cork were closed on Saturdays. The concept was discussed by Mr. Slyne, who was there, and it was accepted by all of the members of the group. For the purpose of avoiding conflicts with sessions of the County Council, the dates of Executive meetings would be determined via the process of arrangement. The Mallow Branch's Mr Lynch proposed that a group from Cork be organised in order to take advantage of the excursion train that was being operated from Mallow to the Beet Sugar Factory in Carlow. This train trip coordination was being operated under the auspices of the Mallow branch. With a return trip from Mallow, the ticket would be 15/4. A date that was set in stone had not yet been agreed upon. It was recommended by the Chairman that people who were interested in travelling to Carlow get in touch with Mr. Lynch.

It was stated by the Secretary that he would issue notifications to each and every branch. In light of the fact that there were still unpaid and uncollected rates totalling £208,000, the White's Cross branch submitted two resolutions, one of which requested that the County Council refrain from imposing a rate until the identities of those who have defaulted on their payments have been made public. In the second resolution, the comment made by Major Watt on the slaughter of foxes was mentioned. The resolution also urged the Executive Branch, all arms of government, and all farmers to participate in the demonstration and assist in preserving one of the most important businesses in the country.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The first half of the resolution, according to the Chairman, was extremely difficult to put into practice. It was not only from week to week that the list of defaulters changed, but it also changed from day to day. The individuals who had not paid were brought to the attention of the bailiffs and collectors in a highly noticeable manner. According to a delegate, it seemed as if there was a policy that prioritised the elimination of foxes. He was of the opinion that the nation was facing a more significant threat, which was the fact that rabbits were rapidly consuming its population. During the previous several years, elderly people and young boys were required to participate in the activity of catching rabbits. He did not feel that there was anything that could be compared to the intentional killing of foxes. If there was a shortage of foxes, it would be simple to satisfy that need by travelling to the highlands and the coast and purchasing foxes. This would be the case if they want to populate the nation with foxes. A modification was made to this section of the resolution.

The Cork and Munster Licensed Trade Protection Association had sent out a notice that brought to light the possibility of public establishments being closed between the hours of three and five o'clock in the afternoon, as well as demonstrating opposition to the regulations that had been suggested by the Liquor Commission. On the other hand, Mr. Brazier believed that they needed to demonstrate sympathy for the licensed alcohol trade.

Additionally, Mr. T. Corcoran, in his remarks, thought that the plan to ban public establishments was both absurd and counterproductive. He failed to see the benefits that would accrue to the City of Cork as a result of this. The consumption of alcoholic beverages was not going to be

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

much impacted by it, according to his assessment; rather, it would be a significant annoyance for those merchants who engaged in mixed commerce. In addition, it would be uncomfortable for farmers who were present at the marketplaces. His suggestion was that they demonstrate against the potential closure of the business. Regarding the topic of compensation, he claimed to be completely ignorant. In spite of the fact that there was no action taken about the other component of the resolution that was presented, it was unanimously decided to file a protest against the closure plan.

A resolution was sent to the Co. Executive by the Doneraile Branch, proposing that it be requested to call upon the Government to issue long-term national loans on the credit of the State. This would make it possible for individuals who are involved in the industry of agriculture to obtain advances on conditions that were more favourable. In its submission, the Branch suggested that it would be beneficial to conduct meetings on Sundays following the services at the church. Mr Blythe had allegedly hinted to the Doneraile Branch by indicating that the government was planning to obtain a loan after the election, according to the Chairman of the Committee. There was no action taken on any of the resolutions since it was determined that they were not essential. There are two resolutions that have been submitted for approval by the North Co. Tipperary Executive. The Farmers' Defence League was attempting to receive what they regarded as fair and reasonable conditions for the payback of excessive bank overdrafts that were provided for the acquisition of land between the years 1914 and 1923. For this reason, one recommended providing the League with complete assistance. In the second request, it was requested that Messrs. Guinness & Co. be asked to provide a statement on

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

their needs and the estimated price that they were willing to pay for Irish barley during the next spring season.

The Chairman said that he did not have any reservations about voicing his disapproval of a resolution that would be detrimental to their reputation and would place the bank managers in a situation where they would have to tell them, "I can give you nothing." This resolution was not, it seemed, a credible one. The first resolution was met with opposition. The Chairman made the following statement in reference to the second resolution: "Suppose they went dry on the Continent, Messrs. Guinness could not tell what they wanted." The Secretary made the observation that requesting this information from Messrs. Guinness & Co. was an impossible request. Regarding the second resolution, there was no action taken.

The annual report and statement of accounts having been read, the Chairman, addressing the meeting, said:

"Today, at our annual meeting, we naturally look back on our year's work. We have just reason to be not only satisfied but proud of it. In the development of the pork trade, our success has been phenomenal. We have shown the Department of Agriculture how to do things. Our Secretary deserves our best thanks for the zeal, energy, and ability he has displayed in connection with this branch of our operations. On the County Council and county boards, our representatives have a most beneficial influence on local government. Our war on the bonus continues. After an apparent repulse in the first engagement when the law was strained against us, we have shamed the Minister for Local Government into considering its abolition in the case of the first. In this matter, we're out to win—we would never give in—and remind you and the Government that no issue they

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

continue to ignore can diminish our just and reasonable demands of the people. In the estimates, the bonus paid on salaries is set out:—Salary, £1,700; bonus, £237. Salary, £1,200; bonus, £263. Salary, £1,500; bonus, £239. Salary £1,000; bonus, £263. Salary £500; bonus, £200. We held a County Convention and selected our candidates for the Dáil at the coming general election. In selecting two distinguished members of a learned profession and one of Cork City's ablest and most successful businessmen—the Chairman of Harbour Board—there can be no clearer proof that the Farmers' Union is free from class prejudice. We have given a lead and an example to the Free State, which I hope would be followed, and which would compel recognition of the fact that the Free State depends on the farmer, and no one has as good a right to rule it as he has. The year past has not been a good year for farmers. Our cattle export has been the smallest since 1912: In 1924, the money value of our cattle export was £15,800,363; 1925, £11,737,552; 1926, £10,811,419. There has been a very slight increase in the sheep trade, though it is much less than it was in 1924. Pig export has also improved.”

The position of chairman for the next year was legitimately awarded to Mr. Brasier, who had previously served as vice president.

The ‘Southern Star’ provided insight on the March 1927 executive meeting. Mr. Brooke W. Brazier presided at the ordinary monthly meeting of the Executive of the County Cork Farmers’ Union, which was held in the Imperial Hotel. A letter was read from the Fianna Fáil organisation requesting a deputation representing the Cork Farmers’ Union to be sent to the adjourned agricultural conference, which was being held under Fianna Fáil auspices in Jury’s

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Hotel on the 10th of March. The letter was marked as "read." The secretary, Mr. Cussen, submitted his report on the position regarding the sale of pork and bacon pigs in England. The report was as follows:

"In order to determine our stance with respect to the sale of fresh pork in Smithfield and bacon pigs in Birmingham, I recently travelled to England with your permission. I was there to find out what our situation is. My time in London lasted for two days, with the most of each day being spent in Smithfield borough. In addition to conducting interviews with a number of the most prominent wholesalers and enterprises, He also spoke with a few of the market's executives, they would be pleased to learn that the pork that was delivered by the Cork Farmers' Union had a very high reputation in Smithfield. This was due to the fact that the pork was of consistently high quality, the carcasses were uniform, and the conditions were excellent. The majority of the time, the pork has been sold at a price that was greater than any pork that had been sent from other locations in Ireland. Their pricing, they asserted had always been in a favourable position in comparison to the prices that were paid for the finest pork in England. Even though the majority of the other companies seemed to be unable to find a market for their stocks, the London salesman had been able to clear the market extremely early in the mornings of each day. It was explained to him that the rapid sales of pork from Cork were a result of the product's superior quality, and he was certain that this was the reason why there was such a strong desire among sales people to sell these products. Furthermore, he was quite satisfied that the present salesmen sold to the best advantages on their behalf, and that the expenses incidental to marketing through them were no higher than would be the case if they marketed through other firms, though it was probable that their net price was higher

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

because of the fine connection held by the present salesmen. On the other hand, he proposed that during the next season, they should consider dividing the supply between two different companies in order to eliminate the danger of any one company having an excessive amount of inventory. When it came to the selling of huge supplies, the distribution would result in increased levels of competition. There was a possibility that the outcome would be more advantageous for our creators. In light of the current conditions, it was not possible for their expenditures to be decreased to a lower amount than the one at which they had stood, nor was it possible for them to be lowered down at any moment until they were able to acquire their very own slaughterhouse. Too much money was being spent on slaughtering animals. At this point, there was no other option. Investment in an abattoir would be the most fruitful course of action, and he recommended the idea to those who had the financial means to put money into it."

He continued by saying that:

"earlier than my trip to Birmingham, I conducted interviews with representatives of many of the most prominent bacon-curing companies in London. The purpose of these interviews was to determine whether or not there was a potential of selling our bacon pigs at a higher profit than we are now making. The Irish farmer who exports to Messrs Marsh and Baxter of Birmingham is earning prices that are practically identical to the net prices acquired by the English farmer who lives next to the factory. This is because there is no other company in England that pays a greater price for bacon pigs than Messrs Marsh and Baxter of Birmingham. I went around to Birmingham. Within our agricultural community, there are some interests that have been spreading rumours to the effect that certain interests are receiving higher

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

prices per cwt. These rumours have been spread with great care. of which are paid to the Farmers' Union each year. It has been made very clear to me that this is not the situation, and I would want it to be recognised that the farmers in County Cork who export one pig get the same amount per cwt. in the same manner as any other person who may send 500 pigs for the one animal. It has been brought to my notice that there is a somewhat high incidence of casualties among the pigs that we have shipped to England, and I have been instructed to strongly convince our members that they must only send pigs that are in excellent health. In the event that this recommendation is not adhered to in a consistent manner, the unavoidable consequence would be that our costs would rise as a consequence of a higher insurance premium. Under all other circumstances, the conditions of our plan are regarded as being as close to ideal as is humanly conceivable."

In relation to the construction of an abattoir, the Secretary stated that the City Commissioner, Mr. P. Monahan, had been approached. He stated that he was willing to provide a suitable site and to enter into an arrangement to rent the abattoir at a fair rent per annum for the purpose of killing all such stock in Cork. This was done in order to ensure that investors could be certain of a reasonable return on their investment. Whatever the case may be, the situation was one that would need care in the not too distant future. In response to Mr. Appleby's inquiry, the Secretary said that the key factor that would determine the cost would be the cost of the slaughterhouse. The price range would be between three thousand and ten thousand pounds. The Chairman said that there had been an attempt made to create an abattoir in conjunction with the planned Cattle Market Scheme. Inquiring as to whether or not it would be

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

feasible to bring the Cornmarket location back to life, the Chairman questioned this.

On the other hand, the hon. Secretary made the observation that it would be open to the public if it were leased by the Corporation (city council, then dissolved), which was represented by Mr. Monahan. In the event that it is kept in the possession of the builders, it would be considered private. According to the Chairman, it was unfortunate that the Cattle Market Scheme was allowed to fail when it was supposed to be successful. It is possible that Mr. Corcoran and others linked with him would rethink their decision to reopen the case and to construct the slaughterhouse, which was absolutely essential for the slaughter of pigs.

The next major meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union was held in June, and Mr. Brooke W. Brazier, M.C.C., served as the meeting's presider. After much deliberation, the gathering eventually decided to form a committee in order to ascertain the stance that would be resulting from the outcomes of the general election held in June of 1927. Following the contribution of a number of members, including the Chairman, Canon Barrett, and Mr. J. McCarthy, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

"That it be an instruction to our delegates to Congress to support any motion for an alliance with the Cumann na nGaedheal Party consistent with the retention of the entity of the Farmers' Party."

This resolution was based on the motion of the Chairman, which was seconded by Canon Barrett.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

A resolution from the Ballineen branch asked the Co. Executive to create a fund to pay for pigs that were harmed or destroyed during rail shipping. The Secretary said that he had gotten a lot of mail on the insurance of pigs during that month's special meeting. He also mentioned that he had received a lot of correspondence regarding the insurance of pigs. They recommended charging six shillings for each pig, but the Secretary thought that this was unfair and may possibly be detrimental to pig shipments coming from areas that were farther off. He proceeded by saying that the majority of the mail originated from Messrs. Marsh and Baxter, as well as a number of insurance firms. His goal was to ask about the costs that various businesses offered for pig insurance from the loading site to Cork city, and he had phoned numerous organisations that had agents in Cork city. The lowest charge that he discovered was twenty shillings per cwt, which was equivalent to one pounds and eighty pence per pig. However, this would only cover pigs who were declared unsuitable to travel and rejected by the vets sitting in the yard. On the other hand, interacting with these other insurance firms turned out, they believed, to be counterproductive.

It was recommended by the Ballineen branch that a fund be established in which they would charge no more than six shillings for each pig. Although the Secretary acknowledged that such a fund might be established, she cautioned that it may soon become inadequate to pay compensation claims. He suggested to Messrs. Marsh and Baxter that owners have the choice of insuring their pigs or not, but they declined his proposal, citing worries regarding the selection of covered pigs and the influence on compensation rates.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Mr. O'Brien advocated that no compensation should be offered to anybody sending unsuitable pigs, highlighting the duty of the sender. This was in reference to the fact that infected pigs were being sent. This viewpoint was endorsed by Mr. Barrett. A decrease in the number of unsuitable pigs that were sent out in recent times was seen by the Secretary, which indicates that there is a possibility of a drop in insurance prices if this trend continues. Subsequently, other aspects of the planned slaughterhouse system were addressed throughout the conference. The progress that has been made in getting cost estimates for construction and equipment was reported by the Secretary. For the purpose of purchasing equipment, he proposed a budget of £2,500 and a trust fund of £4,000. In addition to preparing and signing a lease with Mr. Monahan, who was representing the Corporation, they intended to distribute a prospectus into the hands of farmers for their consideration.

For the sake of insurance, Mr. O'Leary put out the idea, which was subsequently supported by Mr. O'Callaghan, that sick pigs should not be accepted. The next topic of discussion during the conference was the building of the abattoir as well as the future development plans for the facility. The Secretary gave a good response to Canon Barrett's suggestion that the slaughterhouse be intended for general usage rather than simply for pigs. This suggestion was met with positive responses. During the meeting, the Secretary gave the assurance that preparations had been taken for such an extension, which included the inclusion of measures in the lease. Mr. Monahan had consented to the inclusion of facilities for slaughtering and dressing animals. Nevertheless, as we would come to understand, the implementation of this plan would be fraught with a great deal of trouble. The materialisation of this idea did

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

not occur until the early 1930s, when it was the result of a concerted effort driven by economic despair and the persistent efforts of Patrick J. Manley.

The 'Cork Examiner' published an article in July 1927 claiming that Mr. Brazier, Chairman of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, had lately lobbied for the creation of a Beet Factory in County Cork. He said that this would be beneficial to agriculture in the South of Ireland and that it would serve the best interests of agriculture in the region. His suggestion was that the state should provide a subsidy that was reasonable for the aim of this endeavour. At the subsequent monthly meeting of the Executive of the County Cork Farmers' Union, which took place on Saturday at the Imperial Hotel in Cork city, the 'Southern Star' reported that the meeting took place in July of 1927. The Chairman Mr. Brazier presided over the meeting. The chairman started out by speaking about the terrible occurrence that had just taken place in Dublin rather lately. Mr. Kevin O'Higgins TD, a major member (Minister) on the Executive Council, was the victim of a devastating loss that has repercussions that may be felt all around the nation. The Chairman emphasised that such a horrible crime must be denounced by all parts of society, and they sent their deepest condolences to the Minister's family as well as the Executive Council who were affected by this tragedy, and that their organisation, which was responsible for promoting the interests of the agricultural community, was obligated to demonstrate their support. A motion of sympathy was moved by Mr. O'Leary, and Mr. Mullins seconded it. The motion was approved by all members of the group. The Chairman, Messrs. Appleby, Forde, and Jerome O'Sullivan had been selected as delegates to attend the upcoming sugar beet conference that would take place in the Courthouse in the middle of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Cork City. In anticipation of a call for delegates to attend the conference that was due to take place on August 5th in Dublin by the Department of Agriculture, the following people were proposed to go: Messrs. Dring, O'Leary, T. J. O'Donovan, and the Secretary.

According to the 'Evening Echo,' Mr. Brasier served as the meeting's chairman at the annual gathering of the County Executive Committee of the Cork Farmers' Union, which took place in the Imperial Hotel in August of 1927. According to a notice of motion submitted by Mr. Mullins, the monies belonging to the Cork Farmers' Union would be moved from the Hibernian Bank located in South Mall, Cork city, to the Munster and Leinster Bank located in the same South Mall location. It was unanimously agreed upon that this resolution should be postponed for reasons that were not revealed, as requested by the hon. Secretary. In order to compensate the East Cork farmers for the loss they sustained in the exporting of barley during the previous season, the Standing Committee suggested that they be compensated with an additional twelve pounds. As a consequence of the farmers' excellent endeavour to ship barley, which resulted in a loss of around thirty-five pounds owing to the little amount of barley that was exported and the high costs, this proposal was made. In spite of the fact that it had been decided in the past to contribute twelve pounds towards this loss, a later suggestion for a comparable amount was not accepted by a vote of twelve to seven.

Mr. W. Appleby, a resident of the Bandon area, suggested that a notice be published that would draw attention to the significant decrease in the price of pigs and advise that the expenditures per head be reviewed. A subcommittee had been established with the purpose of examining this matter

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

and investigating the possibility of re-organising costs, which may have included the establishment of a new department inside the Farmers' Union. Furthermore, the nomination of a representative to handle their interests in Birmingham was a topic of discussion pertaining to the matter. The Secretary, in response to a question on the basis for selecting a representative in Birmingham, underlined the significance of their commerce there, which amounted to around ten thousand pounds per week, and the Union did not pay any costs for this representation.

During the meeting, the Chairman presented a resolution that addressed the current standing of the Farmers' Party inside the Cork County Council and suggested several ways in which the party may improve its effectiveness. In order to implement a cohesive policy, he highlighted how important it was to communicate with each individual part of the group. Despite the fact that Mr. O'Sullivan acknowledged that there was a lack of allegiance among members even when meetings were conducted, he stated his approval with this strategy. Considering that a significant number of attendees had already departed the gathering by the time the debate began, this motion was not put to a vote.

There was then a protracted discussion regarding the matter of the planned slaughterhouse project. Next, the announcement made by the Secretary, prospectuses were going to be sent to branch secretaries and farmers on an individual basis over the following week. He emphasised the need of obtaining a certain amount of money within a pre-determined length of time, drawing attention to the significant loss that would be incurred by farmers in the event that the project was abandoned owing to a lack of adequate funding. Underscoring the relevance of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

collaborative action in the process of accomplishing their objectives, the Chairman made an appeal to all farmers to show their support for that specific initiative. On the other hand, the project would have a difficult time moving forward for a few more years.

The following suggestions from a special meeting of the Trading Sub-Committee were unanimously approved after extensive debate at the meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union that took place on Saturday, September 1927. Mr. Brazier, M.C.C. presided over the meeting.

"1. It is recommended that a room be set aside for the exclusive operation of a new department that is entirely concerned with the transportation of all animals, regardless of whether they are alive or dead. It was decided that Miss Conlon and Miss Cagney would be in charge of supervising the departmental responsibilities in that room. Additionally, a rent of £84 per year was agreed upon for both the existing offices and the new space that was added.

2. It is recommended that the existing approach, which involves paying an agent based on a capitation charge for pigs that are exported, be modified. As an alternative, a full-time manager for the shipping department would be recruited at a salary of £800 per year, in addition to a commission charge of 1d. per head on all animals transported, with the total remuneration being capped at a maximum of £1,200 per year. Additionally, this manager would be responsible for overseeing all activities in the shipping yard and reporting to the secretary for secretarial duties. In addition to this, they would be in charge of the transportation of other animals, such as cattle and sheep, and they would have the right to hire the appropriate personnel. They would get assistance

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

from a foreman, who would earn £2.10 per week for up to 700 animals transported, £3 per week for any number of animals shipped that is more than 700 and up to 1,000, and £3.10 per week for any number of animals shipped that is greater than 1,000 each week. The Committee would be expected to conduct frequent reviews of the manager's detailed revenue and spending account for the department. This account would be required to be maintained by the manager.

3. A representative would be appointed in Birmingham, with a remuneration of £4 per week, in addition to commissions of 1d per pig for up to 500 pigs received, and ½d per pig for any number of pigs received alive in Birmingham that exceeds 500. Overseeing the timely unloading and processing of consignments, ensuring segregation according to invoiced marks, verifying weights, expediting cheque dispatch and returns to owners, maintaining market connections, and handling any other responsibilities assigned by the secretary under the direction of the Committee are some of the responsibilities that this representative would be responsible for.”

It was requested by the Standing Committee that the following suggestion be sent to the Union's branches located across the county, and the Executive was unanimously in favour of doing so. The recommendation would be taken into consideration at the next Executive meeting.

It was highlighted that due to the fact that the Farmers' Union has a significant interest in commerce, both in terms of exports and imports, a special committee would be established with the purpose of concentrating on this particular element. This committee would be responsible

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

for overseeing the shipping department, as well as handling contracts or purchases of coal, groceries, manures, and seeds. As a result, the Standing Committee and the Executive would be relieved of the obligation of making significant decisions without adequate information. As members of this special subcommittee, they would be known as the Board of Directors of the trade department, and they would be given a subsistence allowance of ten pounds for each meeting that they attended. Additionally, they would be reimbursed for the costs of travelling by train. Their appointment would take place at the Executive's general meeting on a yearly basis, and they would not be eligible for reappointment. Additionally, they would meet at least once every two weeks.

An action from the Fermoy Branch was proposed for adoption by Mr. D. L. O'Gorman during the October meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union. The motion stated that:

“That the action of Mr. Heffernan and those associated with him in An Dáil, who have been elected on the Farmers' Party ticket, in entering into alliance with the Government Party, is a direct reversal of the policy laid down at Congress, and we request the National Executive to arrange for an early meeting of Congress, so that such action may be appropriately dealt with so that such action can be appropriately addressed.”

In his motion to move the resolution, Mr. O'Gorman underlined that the Farmers' Party, via their affiliation with the government, had guaranteed support for plans that were against the interests of the farmers. These proposals included the continuance of bonuses, the income of the Governor-General, and the expenditures of the Army.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

After a long debate, Mr. O'Donovan and Mr. Vaughan, who were both present at the meeting, provided an explanation of their respective positions. They emphasised the conditions surrounding the elections that took place in 1923 and September 1927, with Mr. O'Donovan highlighting the predicament that their group of six members was in and the need of making their own choices in the absence of a National Executive meeting to guide them. In the face of a difficult political environment, they justified their conduct by arguing that they were essential choices. Some others saw the resolution as a response to the fact that they had been defeated in the election. By a vote of 19 to 3, an amendment that was introduced by Mr. D. White and supported by Mr. Mullins, which said, "That we approve of the action taken by Mr. Heffernan and the Farmers' Party in coalescing with the Cumann na nGaedheal Party," was approved.

Regarding the City railroads, Mr. O'Gorman addressed the gathering and said that the G.S.R railway company planned to present a bill in the Dáil with the intention of suspending or discontinuing the train services that were provided between the southern and northern banks of the Lee. He underlined the negative effect that this would have, particularly on farmers located south of the Lee River. In line with resolutions that have previously been approved by the County Council and other organisations, he suggested a resolution that would urge the Dáil and all other public bodies to oppose this measure. All of the participants, including the Chairman, reached a consensus about the significance of the railroads and the negative impact that the planned move would have on farmers. To ensure the success of fairs in West Cork, Mr. O'Heffernan emphasised the need of ensuring that the bridges are well maintained. Instead of recommending that the municipal

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

railroads be shut down, Mr. White campaigned for their growth and expansion. In favour of Mr. O'Gorman's motion, Mr. Cooney brought attention to the negative implications that the motion would have on agriculture. Despite his support for the demonstration, Mr. O'Brien questioned the motivations of the railway business. In response, Mr. O'Gorman indicated that rejecting the bill would reveal light on the financial troubles that the railway sector was experiencing, which may have been related to competition from toll-free roads that were supplied to their rivals by the government and County Councils.

Brazier again served as the meeting's presiding officer at the Cork Farmers' Union Executive gathering that took place in November, 1927, at the Imperial Hotel. An attendance of delegates that was indicative of the whole was present. As a result of the minutes, the Secretary, who was reporting on the meeting that was conducted over the tolls that were imposed at the Cork city market, said that he expected the Commissioner would agree to anything. A further issue that was brought up at the meeting was a suggestion that the maize that was being delivered need to be graded. Due to the fact that merchants were accepting and exporting maize that was either excellent, terrible, or indifferent, the farmers were in danger of losing their market, which would seem to be a negative reflection on their output. There was support from the Chairman for the concept of classifying maize. His emphasis was placed on the fact that just the waste was being transported, since distillers and brewers were able to choose the finest products. The Secretary recounted many cases in which oats shipments had to be removed from the holds of ships, and he questioned how their oats could compete with those from other nations that arrived in English markets in great shape. He pushed for the classification of maize in a

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

manner like to that which was done for butter and eggs. In spite of the fact that Mr. O'Donovan, T.D., was in favour of safeguarding their markets, he considered that simply debate ineffectual. As a result of more deliberation by the other delegates, it was agreed to submit a notice of motion for the subsequent meeting in order to have a comprehensive discussion on the issue. In addition, Mr. O'Donovan brought up the position of the Farmers' Party in the Dáil and remarked on Mr. O'Gorman's expression of views that were similar to his own at the National Executive. Both of these statements were derived from the minutes. He enquired as to whether Mr. O'Gorman was reflecting the opinions of the Cork Executive to the National Executive or if he was representing his personal views. Mr. O'Gorman made it clear that he was a representative appointed to the National Executive, and he communicated not just the opinions of the Cork Executive but also his own personal opinions for the National Executive. He argued that he had the right to do so. It was stated by the "Cork Examiner" that the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Co. Executive took place in 1928. The Imperial Hotel in Cork served as the location for the Cork Farmers' Union Executive meeting. The chairman, Mr. Brazier, presided over the meeting, and the delegates who were there were completely representative of the people. Resolutions that were proposed by the Kilmichael and Doneraile branches were postponed until the following meeting so that they could be discussed. In a statement, the General Secretary of the Irish Farmers' Union expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Co. Executive for the unwavering assistance that has been regularly offered with consistent dedication from Co. Cork. According to him, the example that was established by Cork. The value of Cork was extraordinarily high, especially in the most recent years of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

crucial importance, and he expressed the hope that other counties would follow his example.

In his speech, the Chairman made the observation that a year that had been filled with significant events for both farmers and the State had come to an end. He detailed incidents such as the unsuccessful fusion conversations that took place between the Government and the Farmers' Party during the inaugural Congress. These discussions led to the party's numbers being reduced after future elections after they were held. He bemoaned the fact that the party had been largely rejected. The advice made by the Cork Executive to identify itself with the Government Party, which suggests that it may have averted additional electoral failures with this recommendation. The Chairman made the following observation:

"It is perplexing to comprehend the mindset of farmers, who, despite constituting a significant portion of the country's potential wealth, disregard their right to direct representation and heed the deceptive promises of more dynamic party propaganda. Some have been sadly disillusioned."

He contrasted this scenario with the accomplishments of the Farmers' Union, which include significant tax reductions and legislative reforms that were beneficial to agriculture.

The Chairman expressed his admiration for the accomplishments of projects like as the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Trading Committee, which highlighted the possibilities of efficient organisation and direction. The issues that the agricultural industry was now facing were brought to light by him. These challenges include a decrease in the market for oats as a result of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

mechanised transportation and the need for upgraded facilities for agricultural education and dairy science. In his response to the speech, Mr. O'Gorman recognised the Chairman's gloomy description of the difficulties that the year has presented, especially for farmers. In his presentation, he provided many examples of distress sales that were spurred by directions from the Land Commission. He also mentioned the disparate success rates of the cattle and sheep deals. In spite of the efforts made by a variety of organisations, he condemned the conflicting tactics used by commissions, such as attempts to lower prices while simultaneously increasing tariffs, and he brought attention to the burden that taxes places on farmers. The conference came to a close with the deliberation of a proposal that was submitted by the Glanmire Branch. The motion proposed to halt any future payments to the National Executive Funds until its effectiveness was shown to the satisfaction of farmers in other counties. In his capacity as a representative for the Glanmire region, Mr. Anthony Mullins strongly lobbied for the motion to be approved.

In continuation of the trade report, one of the officials observed that trading activities that took place during the period under consideration resulted in the direct sale of 41,366 bacon pigs, 13,381 porkers, 3,749 sheep and lambs, and 1,482 cattle on behalf of your members. Additionally, it resulted in the distribution of extremely large quantities of manures, foodstuffs, coal, machinery, and other farm requirements at contract prices. He stated that:

"you have made your members and the farmers of the county largely independent of local markets by offering lucrative channels for products and sources that are fiercely competitive for requirements. There are very few people who would not

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

recognise that you have accomplished this. Nevertheless, it is disheartening to have to state that the majority of the farmers are so unwilling to contribute even a single penny to the support of the organisation that is providing them with economic independence. This is the case despite the fact that these invaluable advantages have been created for the entire farming community in the county. It was reasonable to conclude that no other segment of the population gets such help, is required to pay such a little payment on an annual basis, and yet behaves in such a reluctance.”

They thought that by encouraging the establishment of local companies to deal with the by-products, they would be able to reduce the difficulties that would be caused by the limitation of animal trade in the event that this nation were to get infected with the feared foot-and-mouth disease. This intention was expressed during the annual general meeting. However, it was noted that:

“the existence of this organisation and its success are contingent upon you and the farmers of Cork and the counties that border it. By withholding their support, they would condemn it to failure and, as a result, strengthen the shackles that have already connected them to the intermediary. If their support is denied, they would also condemn it to failure.”

It was still the case that the whole amount of cash that was necessary for the Abattoir project was undersubscribed to the extent of £950. However, the board of directors had taken the decision that, beginning on the 20th of January, they would not assign fewer than five shares to any new applicant. This is because the directors believed that if the new applicant was made aware of the benefits, they would join the company in order to acquire a share that was

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

acquired late. In order to establish home markets for store cattle, the directors of the Trading department had made the decision to arrange special sales in the city of Cork. The first sale was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, April 18th. Even at this early stage, they said that the success of the first auction was reasonably secured from the vendors' point of view. This was due to the fact that a number of English farmers had agreed to visit in order to obtain their spring necessities here. In addition, they were certain that their primary Irish customers would be present at the auction. In order to facilitate the exportation of cattle that were purchased at the auction, the City of Cork Steam Packet Company made available a specialised vessel. The Great Southern Railways Company expressed their willingness to provide sympathetic attention to the subject of special rates for cattle that were transported to the auction as well as for those animals who were returned unsold. Additionally, the Great Southern Railway was contemplating the possibility of offering return tickets at excursion rates to purchasers who were attending the sale from England. That being said, they suggested, every effort would be made to continue to maintain the progress that has been made in every direction by the Cork Farmers' Union; that no stone would be left unturned to restore prosperity to the farmer by increasing their income and reducing their expenditures by providing them with the ability to sell their produce directly to the consumer and to purchase their requirements directly from the manufacturer.

The chairman expressed that he had a deep desire to be able to provide a justification for his statement that the previous year had been a profitable one for agriculture. On the other hand, the year had to be considered absolutely devastating for the sector in many different ways. An

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

abundant crop in terms of quantity had been ruined in terms of quality as a result of persistently poor weather. From an already low standard, the prices for fat and storage cattle, sheep, and pigs had decreased. This was a significant decrease. It had been claimed that the high cost of living had been maintained against the hard-hit producer, and the industry as a whole had experienced significant losses in the majority of its branches. In spite of these obstacles, there were valid grounds to believe that they had reached the low-water mark and that the tide had shifted in their favour. With the growing success of results from the Dairy Produce Act, the Eggs Act, and the Live Stock Breeding Act; with the approaching operation of the Agricultural Credit Act; with the Co-operative Act due in the near distance; with generally improved methods of production and marketing, and with a notable desire to take advantage of educational facilities, the Irish farmer had been coming on even terms with his most serious competitors. After the alignment was completed, their inherent advantages of land and accessibility to markets should have quickly made them the vain of agricultural nations. However, this did not happen. The agricultural sector as a whole, and each individual farmer in particular, had been primarily concerned with that day's events throughout that specific day. Over the course of the year, they had received excellent service from the Standing Committee, the directors of the Trading Department, the directors of the Abattoir, and the Executive, all of whom had earned their thanks. His expectation was that he would be granted permission to convey his heartfelt appreciation on his own behalf. In addition, he had been pleased to provide evidence to the excellent way in which every member of the yard and office staff had carried out the responsibilities that were assigned to them.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Having reached his conclusion, he had said that the branch secretaries of the organisation had been the pillars that supported the structure of the organisation. It had been difficult for him to speak too highly of the majority of them, particularly with regard to the manner in which they had answered generously to every demand placed on their time, the manner in which they had followed out all orders, and the interest that they had shown in the protection of their members. The organisation, he observed, had not been stingy in its expression of gratitude for the sacrifices rendered by individuals of whom any organisation might have been proud.

At the meeting of the Executive of the County Cork Farmers' Union that took place in February 1928, Mr. Joseph Barrett, who was the Chairman, presided over the gathering. Mr. D. L. O'Gorman brought attention to the fact that earlier that week, the stock of a farmer called Mr. Nunan, who lived in the Fermoy area, was taken away for the purpose of paying income tax, which had been going on for a number of years. At the current time, it was difficult for a farmer to realise livestock unless he sold them away, and it was very unfair and wrong to grab a man's cattle in such a manner that was so ludicrous. He referred to it as a tyrannical one, and he expressed the hope that once it gained recognition, it would prevent more actions of a dictatorial character from occurring. Mr. Nunan had been keeping a farm account for a number of years, and when he showed it to the individual who was in charge of the collection of income tax, demonstrating that his farm was operating at a loss, he was informed that it would not be taken into consideration. According to Mr. O'Connor (Mallow), a case that was quite similar to this one had taken place in his region, and the farmer involved in that instance was required to pay £47 10s., but the former

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

owner of the farm was responsible for paying the income tax. In light of the fact that there was no motion on the agenda that was related to the topic, the Chairman decided that it was not in order. He proposed that the following resolution be presented to the Congress of the Irish Farmers' Union, which was convened on the 29th and 30th of March:

"That taxation in the Free State is excessive, hinders the development of agriculture and industry, and must be reduced." Mr. O'Gorman's motion was successful.

Mr. O'Gorman proceeded by saying that the capability of the payer was the measure that was most accurately used to determine the magnitude and severity of a tax. According to the Childers Commission, Ireland was overtaxed by two and a half million pounds while the total taxation of all of Ireland was around twelve million pounds. In the Dáil, Mr. Blythe presented the following numbers, which showed the amount of taxes that was levied on each individual in the following countries: Italy, £3 6s 7d; Germany, £4 1s 4d; France, £6 18s; and the United States of America, £6 11s. There was a provision in the Free State Budget for the current fiscal year that called for an expenditure of £27 million, three of which were to be met by borrowing. The Free State had a population of fewer than three million people, thus it is reasonable to assume that they were subject to a tax of between eight and nine pounds per person. At a meeting of the Dublin Rotary Club approximately fourteen months prior, Mr. O'Hanlon, who had previously served as the Chief Industrial Officer in the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, stated that the figures were nine pounds per person in the Free State and eighteen pounds per person in Great Britain. He also mentioned that the people in the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Free State were taxed at a rate of thirty-six percent of their taxable capacity, whereas on the same basis, the figures in England were twenty-two percent. This disparity among the two countries, he said, was shocking.

Furthermore, it was expressed that, even though it had been ten years after the conclusion of the 'Great War,' the government continued to pay a cost of living bonus of 1,300,000 pounds. This bonus was still granted even when new appointments were being made, and it was occasionally awarded under terms that were viewed as more bizarre than ridiculous.

In the case of the empty posts of Lady Superintendent at Munster Institute in Cork and of County Surveyor for Offaly County, for which applications had been solicited, Mr. O'Gorman said that the cost of living bonus would be provided in addition to the income in each of these positions. Mr. O'Gorman argued that the continuation of the cost of living incentive was a breach of ethics, and that the fact that it was distributed in conjunction with new appointments constituted a significant unfairness. The one pound was now equivalent to the dollar and could purchase approximately five times as many francs as it had been before the war. Farm produce was being sold at prices that were lower than those of 1913, and when a farmer found it necessary to obtain a certain number of pounds, he was required to give as much of his produce as he did in the majority of cases in order to acquire them. Produce from farms, livestock such as cattle, sheep, and pigs, and other livestock, he claimed, were the true currency of this nation. They had recently learned in the newspapers that the Free State Army had a total of 830 officers, 11,922 non-commissioned officers, and privates. This meant that there was one officer for every 14 soldiers in the army.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

There was, he believed, no way that absurdity could grow any farther. In addition, they had read about the severe poverty that existed in Ballingarry. In Tipperary, it has been reported that a significant number of families were surviving in a state of semi-starvation. It did not come as a surprise to him when they were able to afford to pay a Governor-General a salary of £27,000 a year. According to his inquiry, what advantages did they get from having a Minister in Paris? He requested that the meeting approve his resolution and made it clear that he would push that it be put into action.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Applebe. According to Mr. J. B. O'Leary (Macroom), Mr. O'Gorman was requested to provide a way that may be used to minimise the amount of taxes. He said that "it has been brought to my attention, Mr. O'Gorman, that this may be accomplished by the elimination of the cost of living incentive and the decrease of the number of active officers." Within the context of the problem at hand, Canon Barrett proposed the establishment of a committee that would investigate the subject in its entirety and provide recommendations to Congress about the areas in which taxes may be reduced. Following the recommendation made by Mr. O'Connor, it was decided to pass the responsibility of dealing with the situation straight to Congress. Mr. Mullins proposed the following resolution:—

"That this executive instructs its delegates to Congress to press for an amendment of the rules of the union to the effect that politics be excluded from its constitution; that Cork be not required to pay more than £60 per annum towards the funds of the National Executive; that no County Association be given representation at Congress which does not contribute

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

20 per cent of its membership subscription up to a maximum of £60 per annum."

Mr. O'Gorman pointed out the first portion of the resolution in regard to politics had been already dealt with, and added that the farmers were entitled to direct representation in the Dáil. While Mr. O'Brien was seconding the motion, he said that they were a group of businessmen and that they should not be involved in political matters.

For a meeting of the Executive of the County Cork Farmers' Union that took place in March at the Imperial Hotel, Mr. Joseph Barrett presided over the gathering. A significant number of branch representatives were present during the event. The resolution that direct politics be omitted from the constitution of the Irish Farmers' Union was on the agenda, and Mr. J. A. O'Callaghan asked that the motion be delayed for a period of twelve months. He said that there were a number of topics on the agenda that were far more important than that particular motion. The Chairman stated that the matter was discussed to a significant degree during the most recent meeting of the Executive. The hon. Secretary was given the directive to distribute a special circular to each branch secretary throughout the county. He was certain that every delegate who was present at that meeting had come with an instruction to vote in a particular manner. If they believed that they should not spend an excessive amount of time debating the matter back and forth, because politics was a very interesting subject that always excited a bit of interest, they might spend an hour and a half discussing it and not get any further. For this reason, he suggested that the only people who should be heard are the proposer and seconder of the resolution, as well as the proposer and seconder of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

the amendment, if there were any. Very Rev. Canon Barrett, Blarney, then moved:

"That in present conditions it is inexpedient for the farmers to engage directly in politics by sending forward candidates for a Farmers' Party in the Dáil (or Co. Council); that experience especially the experience of the recent series of Dáil elections, proves that politics divides the farmers, whereas business is calculated to unite them, that a Central Standing Committee be constituted to convey the views of the farmers to the Government."

When it came to the Farmers' Union in other counties, it was clear that things were in a rather precarious state. Among the overall amount of £367 that was contributed to the Central Executive's finances by all of the Farmers' Unions in the 26 counties, the County Cork region contributed a total of £210 to the fund. As a direct result of this, there was an increase in the amount of commerce conducted in Co. Cork to a greater extent than in all of the others combined. Canon Barrett did not have a negative attitude towards politics; nonetheless, he made it clear that he was not a fan of the idea of attempting to run an association and engage in political activities at the same time. Without a doubt, politics had caused a rift among the farmers. During the most recent General Elections, the Farmers' Party performed very poorly, and it performed quite poorly overall. There was a worsening for it. It was absurd to claim that a group consisting of six Farmer Deputies in the Dáil was representative of the power that the farmers had. It symbolised the difference between two groups of votes: those who believed that stability was the most essential thing, and those who believed that the interests of the farmers, as pushed by themselves, would vote in the other direction. It was a foolish stance,

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

considering that if all of the farmers were to work together to accomplish their goals, they would be able to submit their resolutions to a Central Standing Committee. He was of the opinion that it would be undesirable for one Farmers' Union from one county to guide the Government with one motion, while another Farmers' Union from another county would have a proposal that was in direct opposition to the first. He was of the belief that all motions needed to be directed to a central body that would represent the collective opinion of all farmers. There was never a government that did not have the utmost respect for the votes of all of the farmers in the country, and there would never be a government that would not be dominated by the opinions of the entire body of farmers. On the other hand, there was never a government that would be dominated by a half dozen members of the farmers' Party, and there never would be a government that would be dominated by such a small group of farmers. With reference to the CO. It was the same thing that applied to councils. Everyone was interested in county administration, and they wanted to make sure that they were getting the most out of their money. Canon Barrett proceeded by saying that there were a lot of individuals who were looking for ways to save money, who were interested in maintaining the rates at their current level, and who wanted to give their money the most value possible. It was not a farming operation. When it came to that particular goal, it would be beneficial, he asserted, for all of the people involved to work together. There were several things that a Ratepayers' Party would adopt that would make it more effective than a Farmers' Party. Additionally, a Ratepayers' Party would not prevent farmers from expressing their opinions at conventions of organised political groups. Mr. Jeremiah O'Sullivan (Ovens), who was the person who seconded the motion,

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

said that politicians were using the Union as a stepping stone to status, and that any individual who did so ought to be confined in his own place. According to his argument, if it weren't for their honorary secretary, Mr. Cussen, they would not have a Farmers' Union in Cork.

There was a significant number of delegates present at the meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union Executive that took place in, April 1928, at the Imperial Hotel in Cork. Mr. J. Barrett, who was the chairman of the organisation, presided over the gathering.

The Chairman said that there was a resolution that was approved at the most recent meeting in relation to politics, and that a decision was taken in favour of creating ratepayers' associations. This information was derived from the minutes. They were all aware that the elections for the County Council were going to take place in June of the next year. As a result of the close proximity of the elections, the necessity of preserving as large a body as possible of farmers' representatives in Cork County Council, and the limited amount of time available for the formation of ratepayers' associations, it was decided that the Union candidates for the upcoming election would be the same as they were for the previous election. This decision was made during a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Executive. He (the Chairman) felt certain that each and every member would concur with that statement. It was said by the hon. Secretary, Mr. E. Cussen, that the item was now on the agenda and would be discussed at a later time. In reference to the most recent cattle auction, the Secretary said that it was a successful one in every regard. Both the men who sold the cattle and the ones who purchased them expressed their levels of satisfaction with the transaction. Their numbers would be

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

significantly increased if they attended the subsequent sale, which would be attended by the men who had purchased. Therefore, it was imperative that every effort be made to place those sales on a solid foundation in order to ensure that the goal that they were initially aimed at is accomplished. The farmers would discover that bringing their livestock to the sales would result in a beneficial outcome. If those special sales, which were founded with the same objective, were successful, then their desire for the formation of a cattle market in Cork would have very few grounds to be rejected. This was another argument that was brought up. In the aftermath of it, a resolution was issued that demanded that the railroads provide specific facilities in conjunction with the transactions. During the meeting that took place on that day, the Secretary said that the Standing Committee had taken into account a letter that had been received from Dublin about the distribution of yearly contributions. A recent meeting of the National Executive was held for the aim of revising regulations. During this meeting, an assessment of contributions on the different counties was carried out, and the amount of £150 was imposed on County Cork. Taxes of varying amounts were levied on the remaining counties. There was a unanimous decision made by the Standing Committee to represent to Congress or the National Executive that an annual sum of one hundred pounds would be an adequate contribution from the County of Cork. Additionally, the Standing Committee decided to represent to the Executive that only counties that had contributed to the funds should be given representation at future Congresses.

In connection with this matter, the following motion stood on the agenda, having been adjourned from the January meeting:

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

"That the Co. Cork Farmers' Union pay no further contributions to the National Executive Funds, and that all further connection be severed until that body proves that it merits and enjoys the support of the farmers in the other counties in the Free State. That experience has amply proved that exclusive attention to co-operative selling and buying would place the Union on a sound footing."

This motion was withdrawn, and the recommendations of the Standing Committee passed unanimously.

The following motion in the name of the East Cork District Executive was moved by Mr. H. Daly and seconded by Mr. B. W. Brasier:

"That owing to the great depression in Agriculture, and the inability of farmers to pay their annuities presently, we demand that the Government forego one year's annuity, and also give decadal reductions, as under the Ashbourne Acts, by extending the number of years of payment; that we demand the early vesting of holdings purchased under the 1923 and 1927 Land Acts."

After a discussion, it was decided to delete the portion of the motion relative to the foregoing of the year's annuity, and to appoint a deputation to wait on Mr. Hogan, Minister for Agriculture, on his forthcoming visit to Co. Cork. The following motion from the same Executive was moved by Mr. Brasier, and seconded by Mr. D. P. Forde:

"That we demand a drastic reduction in the Excise duties on beer and spirits, as the present duties cause diminished consumption, and, consequently, re-act on Agriculture."

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Canon Barrett moved an alternative, but the motion was carried by fourteen votes to nine.

The matter of County Council representation was again discussed, and Mr. O'Gorman moved:

"That in view of the undue proportion of local taxation, at present constituting a heavy burden on the resources of the land, steps be taken to secure strong representation for agriculture in the forthcoming County Council elections."

Speaking to his motion, Mr. O'Gorman said it had been decided at the previous meeting by a two to one majority not to take any further part in politics. Those who went to Dublin supported that, though some of them, like himself, were not in favour of it. The curious thing about it was that not a single delegate outside the county of Cork was in favour of not sending forward candidates for the County Councils. He then referred to the meeting of the Standing Committee, at which it was unanimously decided to recommend the County Executive to secure as strong representation as possible on the County Council. Mr. O'Gorman then proceeded to review the work of the present Co. Council and said when they came into power the rates were very much higher than they were at present. Any economies effected had been effected by the united efforts of the Farmers' Party, and every economy made had to be fought for inch by inch. They were also aware that from time to time no opportunity was lost in the Council by certain members to belittle members of the Farmers' Party, undermining it, and discrediting it as much as they possibly could. When certain reductions were made, they were told they were taking the loaf from the poor man's table. It was up to every one of them to get a large party into Cork Co. Council, with Mr. Brasier, seconding.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

At the May meeting, with Barrett chairing, a resolution expressing appreciation for Mr. P. J. Hogan, Minister for Lands and Agriculture, was proposed by Mr. Brasier. Despite objections from Mr. O'Gorman and others, an amendment to proceed with the next business was carried. Mr. Forde suggested adjourning the resolution, but it did not pass. The Chairman suggested that the discussion not be reported, which Mr. O'Gorman objected to, insisting on a full report. Mr. Brasier and Mr. O'Gorman engaged in a heated exchange regarding the resolution and Mr. O'Gorman's alleged lack of sportsmanship.

A July 1928 editorial by the 'Cork Examiner' wrote that the Executive of the Cork Farmers Union deserved praise for arranging a series of lectures with Professor Johnston of Trinity College Dublin. These lectures aimed to elucidate the workings of the new agricultural credit system, enabling farmers to obtain loans for various agricultural purposes. The initiative was deemed crucial, considering the recent challenges faced by the agricultural sector in accessing credit. Years ago, the agricultural sector in the Irish Free State encountered difficulties obtaining loans due to political and economic doctrines promoted by a minority. This led to tightened lending conditions from banks and traders. To address this, the Agricultural Credit Corporation was established, despite criticism regarding interest rates and lending procedures. However, the focus remained on enabling farmers to access funds for essential agricultural needs, such as seed purchases, livestock, land improvement, and infrastructure. Professor Johnston's lectures were anticipated to provide valuable insights, and it was hoped that they would attract significant attendance from local agriculturists. Furthermore, it claimed, there was a broader need for informative lectures in rural areas

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

on economics and other relevant topics. Such initiatives could foster community interest and education, potentially breaking the monotony of rural life and contributing to cultural enrichment.

Mr. Joseph Barrett chaired the October 1928 meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union at the Imperial Hotel. Mr. Forde, B.L., highlighted a Housing Bill in progress in the Dáil. He proposed that for properties valued at £10 and under, four-roomed houses would suitably accommodate people. He suggested a £5 grant per room for these individuals, along with a matching loan from the County Council. Mr. Cooney proposed extending the reconstruction clause to rural areas. Mr. Jerh O'Sullivan discussed the existing restrictions on building dimensions, while Mr. O'Donovan, T.D., supported the resolution, emphasizing its relevance to impoverished farmers. The Secretary raised concerns about the misuse of housing aid by builders and merchants. The Chairman advocated for a Central Purchasing Committee to alleviate the high cost of building materials. The motion faced opposition from Mr. Corcoran, who questioned the County Council's financial capacity and the efficacy of the proposed resolution. Mr. Applebe proposed an amendment for the Council to loan funds at the same interest rate as borrowed. Mr. Forde accepted this amendment, and the resolution passed with Mr. Corcoran objecting. Canon Barrett suggested directing future resolutions to the Farmers' Party in the Dáil rather than central institutions. Mr. O'Donovan, T.D., clarified that this suggestion aimed to avoid political entanglements. The discussion concluded with a consensus to send resolutions to Cork-wide representatives in the Oireachtas for scrutiny.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Barrett chaired the final meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union at the Imperial Hotel. During the discussions, as documented by the 'Southern Star,' Mr. O'Gorman questioned the selection process for candidates, prompting a sharp exchange with Canon Barrett. Despite attempts to maintain focus on the issue at hand, tensions escalated as personal remarks were exchanged. Mr. O'Gorman criticised Canon Barrett's stance, highlighting past conflicts and questioning his eligibility to comment on the Farmers' Party's actions. This sparked further disagreement, with Canon Barrett objecting to what he deemed irrelevant comments. The debate continued with Mr. O'Gorman defending the actions of the Farmers' Party in the County Council and emphasising their dedication to serving the community. Mr. Brasier supported Mr. O'Gorman's amendment, arguing for fair representation and highlighting the contributions of council members. Amidst the heated exchanges, Mr. White proposed postponing the discussion to the next meeting, which was agreed upon despite Mr. O'Gorman's objections. Eventually, a recommendation from the Standing Committee regarding legal matters was adopted after a lengthy debate, despite an unsuccessful attempt to send it back to the branches for further consideration. Overall, the meeting was marked by impassioned exchanges and divergent views on party politics and organisational matters within the Farmers' Union.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE

MEETINGS 1929-1930: DE-RATING

AN ISSUE

In 1929, the CFU kicked off the year with its annual gala, which took place on January 15 in the Clarence Hall, which was located within the Imperial Hotel, Cork City. Even though it was operating on a very modest scale, the slaughterhouse was now thriving as a running company. There was a significant increase in the amount of promotion of the business via the use of regular newspaper advertising.

The annual general meeting of the CFU executive was held at the Imperial Hotel in January 1929. Mr. Joseph Barrett, Chairman of the CFU, presided over the meeting. A letter from the Mounreabbey branch of the Union was read by the secretary, in which the members of the union expressed their vehement opposition to the action taken by the North Cork Board of Health, which was to impose a burden on the ratepayers in the Mallow rural region to the tune of £11,000 for water projects. They deemed the extra expenditures that the aforementioned number would involve to be completely uncalled for, particularly when taking into consideration the fact that subsidies had been granted towards the installation of pumps in regions where people were unable to keep the water away from their yards. This was done in light of the predicament that the agricultural community was now operating in. Because of the presence of a member of the North Cork Board of Health, it was determined that the topic should be postponed until the next meeting scheduled for that purpose.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

As part of his analysis of the situation during the course of the previous year, the Chairman said that the balance sheet demonstrated that the union was operating on a solid foundation. Despite the fact that 1928 could not be considered a great year for farmers, they had been able to keep their position throughout the year. On the contrary, it was just the opposite; the price of cattle plummeted even lower, as did the price of pigs, which was something that the members of the union were really interested in. The strength of the organisation, as seen by the balance sheet, was properly maintained despite the fact that this was the case. This was extremely satisfying; nevertheless, despite the fact that they had accomplished a great deal in the county, which he considered was more well organised than any of the other counties, they should not be content with the position they are now in. There was still a great deal of work to be done. They would have a lot of work to do in order to maintain the union in a position that was beneficial for its members and to generally watch out for their interests in every particular area as the times changed. The only way for them to make it a success is for them to infuse themselves with a feeling of loyalty. If they achieved this, they would be able to make it a successful and helpful body. It was possible to characterise the work done by the Farmers' Union as teamwork, which involved working together, rather than relying on individual efforts. In order for them to be successful in making the union a success, they believed that they needed to recognise that it is the collaboration of the members that would make it successful, and that this required better structure both at the headquarters and in the branches. It appeared that 1928 was a year that was full with exciting events. First and foremost, they attempted to establish the Abattoir Company, which, as he was pleased to report, was a profitable venture. Despite the fact that the balance sheet

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

had not yet been distributed, he was certain that once it was received, it would be a very satisfying one. In addition, the Chairman made a reference to the outstanding work that Mr. Cussen, the hon. secretary, had done in relation to the abattoir and the union in general. His report was then read out by the secretary.

"The past year has been a bad one for farmers. Corn was a poor crop, and those experts who recommend farmers to grow wheat should remember that in parts of the Free State last year, rain fell on 260 days. Allowing for the seasonal rise and fall in livestock, there had been a continual fall in cattle prices, and middling stores were almost unsalable. It was right to say that there were wide areas in the Free State that could only produce middling cattle."

"We received a letter from Berehaven not too long ago," Mr. O'Gorman continued, "complaining that farmers there are unable to sell their cattle. One of the reasons given was that they are coerced into using Kerry bulls, and that shorthorn bulls, which would be a much better fit for them, are prohibited by the Department of Agriculture." In recent times, the news has reported on a complaint that is quite similar to Kerry's.

On more than one occasion here, we have considered the establishment of sugar factories in the country. You have all been reading a good deal about beetroot and the government bargain recently. The company was, and is, to get an average subsidy of £23 per tonne for sugar for ten years. This is to cost the country about three million pounds. Seven tonnes of beetroot would make a tonne of sugar, so the subsidy is more than £3 per tonne for beetroot.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The bank data that were recently released reveal that there has been a significant decline in note circulation, which coincides with an apparent gain of almost three million pounds in deposits. There is a possibility that this rise may earn an excessive amount of prominence. During the meeting of the Midland Bank that took place on Tuesday, the Chairman of the Midland Bank, Mr. Reginald McKenna, who is without a doubt one of the most influential living experts on finance, said that the year had been a poor year for commerce, although at the same time deposits in all banks had grown. There was a twenty million dollar rise in deposits being held in the Midland.

You are aware that the English farmer is to be relieved from local rates! He is already much better placed than his Irish brother. His transit charges on cattle are a mere fraction of what the Irish farmer pays; his concentrated feeds are much cheaper, as are also his boots, his clothes, and many other necessities of life. Despite all these advantages, I saw not long ago that over 400 English farmers became bankrupt last year, and if the Irish farmer survives, it is only because he and his wife and some of their family work like slaves for nothing. A day or two ago, the Chairman of the Monaghan County Council (Senator Toal) pointed out that in England, the valuation of agricultural land was 2.4% of the valuation of the whole country; in Scotland, 6%; in Northern Ireland, 33%; and in the Free State, 65%. That, I think, makes it clear that de-rating is not possible here, and that the farmers must bear the burden. The policy of the extra cow and the extra sow is sound, but the extra thousand for the Governor-General shows which way the wind blows; and there seems to be a determination on the part of our government to persist in an expenditure beyond our capacity and to compel the continuance of two governments in a country which can only afford one, and that on modest lines.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

To my mind, it is a disgrace that we have a frontier which divides hundreds of farms and causes endless trouble and enormous expense. Mr. Colbert, in Cork, and Mr. Hogan elsewhere, called attention to what I often told you before, that the average Irish holding is only about 35 acres. The occupier, even if rent and rate free, would still be very poor. The entire cultivatable area of the Free State is only about 12.5 million acres, a deal of which must be very poor land, but we spend on the most lavish scale. You are going to have an increase in your rates, and in yesterday's 'Examiner' you saw where Mr. Blythe told a deputation that we are to have an increase in taxation, and that there can be no further reductions. You have still six Farmers' representatives in the Dáil. I ask you to ask them to oppose any increase in taxation under any heading. I do not like the Opposition policy, but Mr. Blythe's statement cannot be allowed to pass. If you are in earnest, create a party and right yourselves."

In a story that was published during that month by the 'Irish Independent,' it was said that, to paraphrase an ancient proverb, those individuals who do not take the initiative were destined to be thrown against the wall. According to the Cork Farmers' Union, this reality was well understood. Their annual report made the following statement:

"Most of those who keep abreast of the times, who avail themselves of the most modern methods of farming, and who co-operate for the sale of their produce and the purchase of their requirements, are willing to admit that they can more than make ends meet. Unfortunately, there are too many of us who stick to the old groove of antiquated methods, and who would not do anything that our fathers and grandfathers did not do."

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

This was, apparently, an accurate representation of the mindset of the majority of Irish agricultural workers. This deficiency or insufficiency has been brought to the notice of the "Irish Independent" a number of times. It was possible that criticism from outsiders was not very agreeable; nevertheless, when farmers themselves pointed out flaws and provided a solution, their views couldn't be resented, as the statement claimed.

It was in March of 1929 that the Abattoir conducted its first annual general meeting (AGM). At a special meeting for the Cork Farmers' Union Executive that took place in April 1929 at the Imperial Hotel, Mr. T. Corcoran, M.C.C., Chairman, presided over the proceedings. When the proceedings first began, there were not a lot of delegates there, but that number gradually increased as time went on. In response to the reading of the minutes, Mr. O'Gorman made the observation that the minutes were not accurate. He said that there had been a resolution introduced at the last meeting, which protested against the reduction of postal services. This resolution had been seconded and approved. The minutes did not include any mention of this. The Chairman expressed his belief that this was the case.

According to Mr. O'Gorman, almost all of the individuals present in the room were all in support of the decision. Therefore, he requested that the minutes not be signed until this subject had been included on the agenda. Mr. Cussen, who was the Secretary, said that he would request that the resolution be included. He recalled that the issue was brought up from time to time, but he did not recall that it was ever addressed. The Chairman said that a significant number of events had transpired since their last gathering, as a result of which they needed to bring

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

attention to them. A motion from Cork, for which their Secretary (Mr. Cussen) was responsible, was one of the topics that was considered at the meeting that National Congress held in Dublin. Various topics that were addressed included numerous items. That resolution was considered, and an amendment to this was carried out unanimously, according to him. The amendment asked the farmers in the Dáil to maintain their independence and, in the process of reorganising the Farmers' Union, to put politics alongside the business and trade part of the organisation. In order to place the organisation on a solid foundation for its operations, a committee consisting of eight individuals was established. This group convened once again and discussed the whole matter in order to provide a report. At the meeting that took place on Wednesday of this week in Dublin, the committee deliberated on the topic for a period of eight to nine hours. It was at eleven o'clock that they reached a consensus, which, according to him, was well received by each and every member of the Farmers' Union. There were a number of proposals that were put up, including the following:

- (1) *That when the union is reconstituted over the whole of the Free State, special emphasis should be paid to economic growth along lines that may be most suitable for each region.*
- (2) *In order to facilitate coordinated efforts in the field of economic growth, it is recommended that close contact be formed with agricultural groups that have been granted approval.*
- (3) *That we reaffirm our conviction that representing the economic interests of agriculture in the Oireachtas in a manner that is both straightforward and forceful is necessary.*

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

(4) *From a political standpoint, we suggest the establishment of a political machine that would make it feasible to keep a powerful independent party in existence.*

The next day, these proposals were presented to the National Executive, and they were approved by a unanimous vote; hence, this was now the policy that the Farmers' Union branches throughout the nation should be adhering to. The issue of whether or not land could be vested in accordance with the 1923 Act was one of the other topics that they examined. In light of the fact that they were in agreement that it was a subject that required prompt attention from the government, a delegation consisting of four individuals was selected to wait on the Minister that evening. Although they were unable to meet with the Minister, they were able to speak with his secretary, Mr. Roddy, and they brought up the significant difficulties faced by those tenants who were unable to get vested, despite the fact that the Act had been in effect for six years and there was no possibility of their obtaining vested for many years to come. They also brought up the fact that it was a national issue, stating that if those farmers had vested interests, they would take action and do all in their power to enhance their holdings. In response, the Minister's Secretary said that he believed every word that was said, and that he sympathised with them, but that he also pointed out that there were numerous challenges. There were two questions that needed to be clarified: the first was the title issue, which was an essential one, and the second was the arrears question. He said that the government was completely in control of the situation and that they would give the issue of vesting their full attention. Additionally, they were aware that the Budget had been presented, and a few of them were particularly excited about the prospect of decreased taxes. The topic of de-

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

rating was brought up since there was very little change, yet it was considered. It was decided to completely exclude the farmer from paying rates in both England and Northern Ireland. A number of individuals have expressed their belief that the issue of de-rating would not be relevant to this nation. He was not in agreement. He believed that it was possible to apply it to this nation, and he believed that it should be implemented since they were significantly disadvantaged in their ability to compete with the English and Northern Ireland farmer, who did not pay any additional rates. It was just a total of two million pounds, which may seem to be a very large amount, but in the context of the existence of an agricultural country, it is a rather little amount. They were entitled to their rights, and they must have their rights (applause), and the farmers and labourers of this nation were the lowest paid in the world. They were, he asserted, also entitled to their rights.

The next motion that was presented on the agenda was titled "That taxation in the Irish Free State is excessive and must be drastically reduced." It was submitted by Mr. O'Gorman. O'Gorman said that this resolution had been included on the agenda about three months ago; however, due to an oversight, it had been removed off the agenda list. Now it was happening once again, and he considered that it was happening at a most opportune moment, immediately after the introduction of the Budget, when, as Mr. Corcoran mentioned, a good lot was anticipated by the farmers, and a good deal was required. He had been in Dublin last Wednesday, at a meeting of the County Councils' General Council, and a resolution came on there from South Co. Tipperary, suggesting very drastic treatment of the Governor-General's salary, of salaries of Senators and other gentlemen, and there would be some who would be surprised to hear that he had moved an

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

amendment to that resolution, because he did not agree with the view that it was, in his opinion, a small and narrow view and an un-statesmanlike one. In the month of May, both the resolution and the amendment would be taken into consideration. At this point, he requested authorisation to remove the resolution that had been included on the agenda and to replace it with a resolution that was more thoroughly reasoned and one that justified itself. The following is how it went:

"We, the Cork County Executive of the Irish Farmers' Union, would like to bring the following data to the attention of the government: On June 1st, 1926, the total area of the Free State that was under pasture and crops was 12,255,736 acres. It is anticipated that the national expenditures for this year would amount to around 24 million pounds, and a loan of five million pounds would also be obtained. In the Free State, the land is the source of seventy-five to eighty percent of the wealth and the taxes that is distributed. For the total of 24 million pounds, eighteen of them would come from the land. That is comparable to one pound and three pence. "Od" all over the Free State, on a per statute acre basis. The charge for local rates should be included. The tax amount in Cork County is £373,381, which is comparable to more than five pounds, and it covers an area of 1,392,422 acres that are used for grazing and crops. per acre, which resulted in an increase of one third of a pound to the total national cost. The sum of Od. equals a total of £1 8s. "Od" annually in the county of Cork. Other counties hardly vary from one another. It is impossible to charge this amount, regardless of whether it is rent or an annuity. We are demanding an immediate and significant decrease in the amount of money spent by the country. In addition, we highlight the fact that English farmers have been exempted from paying local taxes on land and farm

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

structures. Furthermore, they are able to acquire clothing, boots, soap, and a wide variety of other necessities of life at a far lower price than Irish farmers, who compete in the same market. “

According to Mr. O'Gorman, he would be delighted to hear anybody reject the arguments that he had presented with regard to this matter. Statistics that were issued by the Department of Industry and Commerce, which covered the period from 1847 to 1926, included the information that was provided on the acreage. He was of the opinion that a decrease in taxes was the only thing that could save the Irish farmer. At times, he would make the audacious assertion that even if the amount of taxes were reduced from 24 million pounds to 12 million pounds, they would still be subject to excessive taxation. The one and only decrease that Mr. Blythe suggested was a return to barbarism by lowering the efficiency of the mail service, which would amount to a mere £42,000.

He then went on to list the categories that he believed might be used to make significant reductions in the amount of money that was spent. He began by addressing the issue of the bonus, which he said was worth a total of one million five hundred thousand pounds. It was not clear to him why public personnel should be afforded any more protection from the ups and downs of the market than the average person would be. When it came to the topic of abolishing the army, there were others who believed that he was in the wrong. Instead of getting rid of the army, he wanted to have it transformed into a police force and get rid of the generals and majors who were in charge of training it. At the most recent election, Denmark had made the decision to get rid of their army. In the name of common reason, he questioned, who were they in the Free

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

State going to fight, other than themselves? As stated in the report of the Auditor General, the expense of sending six officers to the United States to study the art of war was five thousand pounds. The same report also mentioned an officer who had been off duty for one day, then returned to service for one day, and was then granted a pension. He would inquire about the money that the Governor-General received while he was at the height of his career and singing "Rule Britannia" to the Himalayas. He would do this in reference to the Governor-General. Despite the fact that the twelve million pounds he had specified were under crops and pasture, he inquired what the proportion of land in this nation that would not be considered valued at two dollars. 6.d. it is one acre. Mr. Hogan himself had informed them that the typical size of a farm in the region was forty acres, and that a person who owned such a property, in addition to having a wife and family, was considered to be a really impoverished person. He pondered the amount of land that would be required to generate the sum of twenty-six thousand pounds that was spent on the Governor-General and to keep the jumping circus that they had moving around Europe, as well as the advantages that it would provide to them. Despite the fact that he did not believe that ambassadors were required, he was able to obtain the five thousand pounds that was required to send six officers to the United States.

In May of 1929, a meeting was held at the Victoria Hotel of the Cork Chamber of Commerce to discuss the possibility of creating a cattle market in the City of Cork. The conference was organised under the auspices of the Cork Farmers' Union and included representatives from a number of public organisations from both the city and the county. The President of the Cork Chamber of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Commerce, Mr. M. J. Barrett, served as the presiding officer.

Others present included: Messrs. R. T. Buckley, H.C., Chairman, Cattle Trade Association; S. Dillon, T. P. Dowdall, P. Crowley, W. L. Kelleher, C.E.; K. Corcoran, T. Corcoran, M.C.C.; R. W. Sinnott, Brooke W. Binsicker, M.C.C.; T. J. Murphy, H.C.; B. P. Forde, B.L.; C. E. Elwood, P.C.; Liam de Roiste, T.C.; M. J. Nagle, J. T. Mulligan, W. Desmond, T.C.; C. McCarthy; P. Monahim, City Manager; D. O'Connor, P.C., Copstown Abbey, Mallow; W. Appleby, E. Wall, E. J. Cussen (Secretary, Cork Farmers' Union), and M. Hanly, O.M.

The Chairman called attention to the significance of the meeting for Cork city, pointing out that the absence of a cattle market in the city was a big problem that needed to be addressed. He proposed that they take into consideration beginning their endeavours on the location of the former City Hall, which he considered to be the most practical option without spending significant costs. He brought attention to the fact that, according to his deep knowledge of Munster, farmers, livestock traders, and graziers were all quite supportive of the programme of action. Farmers from Kerry and West Cork faced significant financial and time constraints when it came to transporting their livestock to Dublin. Because they would be able to save both time and money by bringing their cattle to Cork, they would be able to return home in a timely manner to handle their mail.

The objective of the meeting, according to Mr. Cussen, was not only to develop a typical cattle market as was previously envisaged; rather, it was to create a series of fairs that are comparable to those that are held in different

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

county centres. As a significant area in terms of cattle production, Cork deserved to have its own market. The fact that numerous cattle from other regions were already being moved through the city for the purpose of shipping or rail made it only logical for them to be sold in Cork city. The Farmers' Union was of the opinion that it would be reasonable for Cork city to have a market that was of the equivalent to those found in regional, smaller towns.

In addition, Mr Cussen indicated that there was a good location available, and it was anticipated that the Corporation would offer the use of the Corn Market. On account of its proximity to the shipping yards and its proximity to the railway, this position was exceptional. There was sufficient justification for the backing of local businesspeople due to the prospective economic advantages for the city. During the meeting, the purpose was to ascertain whether or not it would be possible to establish a cattle market, whether or not they could make arrangements with the Corporation to use the yard, and whether or not there was sufficient support from buyers and producers to maintain the market.

Over the course of a considerable amount of time, Mr. T. Corcoran, M.C.C., said that the concept of a cattle market in Cork had been contemplated. There was a market on Blarney Street in the past, but it has since lost its notoriety owing to the fact that it is difficult to reach and the amenities that it has are out of date. Any previous efforts to build a market at the location of the Corn Market were unsuccessful due to the presence of interested interests and budgetary restrictions. Given the ideal position of the market in close proximity to transit amenities, he suggested that a properly-managed market would be beneficial to the inhabitants of Cork city as well as the municipal rates. The

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

establishment of this market would be beneficial to local businesses, including hotels and stores, since it would attract retail sellers. After then, he emphasised the need of making a concerted effort in order to bring this initiative to fruition.

According to a report that was published in the Irish Independent in August 1929, a meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union revealed that there were significant differences of opinion over the question of whether or not the quality of Irish cattle is improving or deteriorating. Mr. A. W. Appleby said that cattle merchants had mentioned a reduction in the quality of their stocks, and one shipper informed him that unless actions were done to enhance the cattle, there would not be any Irish animals sold in England in a short period of time. This information was provided by Mr. Appleby. A motion was made by him to explore the possibility of taking steps to enhance the quality of cattle in order to preserve the reputation that Irish cattle have had. In spite of the fact that Mr. T. O'Gorman, the chairman, did not see any changes in the cattle, he said that it was absurd to assert that there had been an improvement. Despite the fact that there were only a few good cattle being produced, the ordinary cattle, who had been providing creamery milk for three generations, had a terrible constitution. Another sensitive subject that he brought up was the fact that a sizeable proportion of the Shorthorn cattle were afflicted with TB, and that there was no use in making an effort to hide this information. Not only did this problem affect Ireland, but it also affected England and Scotland. It had been far simpler to sell fine heifers than it had been to sell bullocks over the course of the last several years, and their best heifers ran out of stock during the fall. In his capacity as a cow feeder, Mr. Joseph Barrett voiced the opinion that the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

overall run of cattle was as excellent as it had ever been, and that when they were fed, they grew into better animals than they had been in the past. The Scottish purchasers were more than certain in their belief that the quality of Irish cattle had significantly increased.

During the month of August, Mr. T. Corcoran presided over a meeting of the CFU, which was attended by a significant number of members. It was recommended by Mr. B. W. Brazier, M.C.C., that prior to moving on with the work of the meeting, it would be appropriate and appropriate for their organisation to pass a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Dr. Preston of Mallow. When it came to carrying out his responsibilities, Dr. Preston was recognised for his integrity and honour, and he was considered to be virtually at the top of his profession in the Irish Free State. Mr. Brazier considered that the medical community and the agricultural community had suffered a significant loss as a result of his demise at a very old age. His name was unparalleled at the national level, and he was the most well-known individual in the country. Up to the very end, his abilities were completely unimpaired. The motion was seconded by Mr. J. Barrett, who said that he had known the late Dr. Preston and that his honesty was beyond any reasonable question.

In order to pass this vote of compassion, the Chairman said that it would be the consensus sentiment of the membership of the meeting. He recalled Dr. Preston from when he was a young man, and he did not hesitate to add that even back then, Dr. Preston was a wonderful and well regarded medical practitioner. With a letter, the publishers of an agricultural newspaper requested that the Farmers' Union publicly acknowledge their publication as a legitimate publication. During the meeting of the standing

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

committee, the Secretary remarked that it was agreed to mark the letter as "noted." A member brought up another journal and inquired as to whether or not it was not the official organ of the Cork Farmers' Union, as it was claimed in its issues. In response, the Secretary said that this was not significant in any way, other than the fact that it was shared among the members of the Cork Farmers' Union Association. He was the one who formally submitted reports of the meetings to this magazine; nevertheless, the reports that were presented here were only the ones that were published in the Examiner. Additionally, it was agreed to submit reports to the journal that had received the letter. This decision was made in response to the Chairman's proposal, who said that it would not be detrimental to the situation.

The Secretary read the following letter that he had addressed to each of the Branch Secretaries:—

"Dear Sir,

In connection with the executive meeting that was held on the 17th of January, the agenda for which I had sent you under the date of the 7th of January, the following motion was submitted by Mr. W. Appelbe (Bandon) too late for inclusion, and because the subject is likely to prove contentious, I have deemed it advisable that your branch have the opportunity to consider it. Motion—"That means be considered by which the standard of cattle might be improved so as to retain the reputation which Irish cattle have enjoyed."

At the meeting of the Bandon Branch, Mr. Appelbe said that this motion had been approved, with one person expressing his disagreement. He had brought it to his

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

notice at the request of cattle dealers and shippers, who had brought to his attention the reduction in the quality of their stocks. She had brought it to his attention. One shipper informed him that the county's cattle had been deteriorating substantially over the previous three or four years, becoming quite terrible, and that if the Farmers' Union or some other organisation did not take action to improve them soon, there would not be any Irish beasts sold in England. This information was provided to him by the shipper. An somebody with his level of expertise, who was one of the major shippers in the South of Ireland, if not the largest shipper in the region, used language that was rather forceful. The farmers themselves had the same issue, and Mr. Appelbe was taken aback when he saw the kind of cattle that many of the farmers had at the most recent Bandon fair. At the Clonakilty Agricultural Show, he saw the milking cows returning from the judging process. These cows were all elderly animals, and their horns were covered with wrinkles that were comparable to the number of knots on a blackthorn stick.

Mr. R. Daly, M.C.C., made the observation that they ought to have been filed down. Mr. Appelbe continued by saying that it was up to them to determine what the most effective means of enhancing the situation would be. Following this, the Chairman inquired as to whether or not the Bandon branch had presented any explanations for their criticism of the condition of the cattle. In response, Mr. Appelbe said that he would like to listen to the viewpoint of another individual before expressing his own. The Chairman noted that Mr. Appelbe had made a very powerful argument that required a great deal of study; nonetheless, he was curious as to whether or not the committee had allocated the depreciation of shares to any specific factors. A participant made the suggestion that

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

they needed to be in possession of the identities of the shippers who made these complaints.

At the most recent conference of the Cattle Traders' Association, which took place in Cork and at which all of the names were presented, Mr. O'Gorman claimed that it was indicated that their storage cattle were not as excellent as they were four or five years ago. All of the most well-known cattle dealers were there, and most of them were well-versed in their trade. Personally, he did not see any changes in the cattle at this time, and he did not feel that it was feasible to produce any significant changes in the cattle over the period of 10 years. On the other hand, he argued that it was illogical to state that there had been an improvement. During the meeting of the standing committee that took place that morning, he had provided the names of two individuals—he could have provided a half dozen—one of whom was a farmer and feeder in addition to being a dealer, and the other was a breeder who was the most extensive in the county. Both of these individuals said that the cattle had decreased. They were able to tell from the reports that were coming from the Dublin market that the Aberdeen Angus and Hereford classes were achieving the highest prices, and these were the breeds that the Department of Agriculture was ignoring.

In the course of a discussion on the cultivation of barley, Mr. E. J. Cussen, the Secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union, stressed that he was a representative of both farmers and feeders, and that a significant number of individuals in his county were prospects for purchasing barley. The economic worth of the barley was a factor that determined the amount to which they would acquire its products. First and foremost, the producers themselves

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

were the source of the difficulty when it came to selling barley. If they wanted to discover a solution, they would have to put in a significant amount of work. The majority of their efforts consisted of little more than making complaints, despite the fact that they had taken some actions, they had not done nearly enough. This strategy would not get them any closer to their goal. The establishment of an institution that would represent the farmers and be entrusted with finding answers to their problems was the only possible response to the problems that they were experiencing. Up to this point, there had been very little effort devoted to organising the situation. In order to build a market among feeders that was an alternative to those supplied by brewers and malters, it was necessary for feeders to be taught about the feeding capabilities of barley. Currently, he noted, there was a substantial bias among feeders against barley in support of maize.

The 'Irish Independent' stated in October 1929 that the Executive of the Drinagh Branch of the Cork Farmers' Union voted in favour of a resolution that urged the National Executive of the Union to emphasise to the government the urgent need for a de-rating scheme that would exempt farmers in the Free State from all rates on agricultural land. This scheme would be comparable to the one that had been implemented in Northern Ireland. Mr. D. P. Dowdall made the observation that this matter had developed into a matter of national concern, and he emphasised the need of exerting pressure on the government to form a Commission as soon as possible. Before any serious action could be taken, Mr. Brazier emphasised that there were a number of aspects that needed to be carefully examined. In his argument, Mr. O'Gorman said that any rise in revenue was undesirable

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

and indicated that the two million dollars that would be required for de-rating might be obtained by reductions in taxation charges. Farmers were given the advice to push their members in the Dáil to withdraw their support from the government and to get ready to create a party that would be dedicated to representing their interests in the Dáil.

There was a degree of scepticism voiced by the Very Reverend Canon Barrett over the practicability of relieving farmers of their rates while also generating the required revenue via taxes. In his argument, he said that lowering rates would almost certainly lead to an increase in taxes, which would render Mr. O'Gorman's idea unattainable. He made the point that if de-rating were a realistic option, the Minister of Finance would have already undertaken it in order to produce more money. Nevertheless, in light of the budgetary limits that are now in place, finding money for de-rating presented formidable obstacles. The process of de-rating was not a simple answer; the implications of this change on taxes required considerable thought. De-rating might be beneficial for some people, but it could have a negative impact on a great number of other people.

According to a story that was published in November by the 'Irish Independent,' the new De-rating Commission was the topic of a heated discussion that took place at a meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union. This discussion ultimately resulted in the resignation of Mr. Cussen, who was also a member of the De-rating Commission. It was decided by a majority of the members to approve a resolution that expressed dissatisfaction with the makeup and terms of reference of the Commission. The resolution said that at least fifty percent of the Commission's members should be genuine farmers. The

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

motion was proposed by Mr. D. O'Gorman, who indicated that Mr. Green was the sole genuine farmer serving on the Commission, in contrast to Mr. Baxter, who did not have any farming experience. In response, Mr. Brazier raised his hand and pointed out that the head of the Farmers Party in the Dáil was, in fact, a farmer.

It was emphasised by Mr. O'Gorman at this meeting that a farmer was someone who makes their livelihood via farming. He also said that Mr. Cussen, although being an outstanding secretary for the Cork Farmers' Union, was not a farmer. He also voiced his worry that Mr. Cussen, in his capacity as secretary of the Union, would now be judging the Farmers' Union, which he had previously served, and that it was impossible for anybody to serve two masters at the same time. The presence of Mr. Cussen on the Commission was a contentious issue due to the fact that the Executive should have been contacted in order to choose their representatives. A member of the Commission was suggested by Mr. O'Gorman, who suggested that Mr. T. Corcoran, who was the Chairman of the Cork County Council, should be included. He came to the conclusion that when public opinion became very strong, the government often crowded juries.

Mr. R. Daly offered his support for the resolution. Mr. Wall voiced his opposition to the implication that the jury was overloaded, particularly due to the fact that it included their Secretary, Mr. Cussen, whom he referred to as being quite important to the Executive staff. Both Mr. Cussen, who was well-versed in the country, and Mr. Broderick, a farmer who owned 400 acres, were chosen by the government, and Mr. Brazier confirmed their decision. He emphasised that other individuals, in addition to farmers, who had a stake in the de-rating process needed

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

participation on the Commission, and he considered the decision made by the government acceptable. Mr. McCarthy (Leap) presented a resolution that was passed by his branch. According to this resolution, Mr. Cussen's involvement in the Government's De-rating Commission stood as a rejection of the decision that was made by the Executive on October 5 of that year.

It was the belief of the Very Reverend Canon Barrett that removing the personal aspect from the resolution would be sufficient to satisfy any concerns that were raised. During the subsequent conversation, Mr. O'Gorman gave his consent to modify the resolution by eliminating Mr. Corcoran's name and replacing it with "The Chairman of the Farmers' Union." However, this change was not accepted, despite the fact that Canon Barrett had advocated completely removing that portion of the resolution. Mr. Cussen, the secretary, resigned from the Farmers' Union as a result of his protests against the resolution, which suggested that he was unable to serve on the Commission on the basis of his qualifications. Mr. Cussen was given the assurance by the chairman and Mr. O'Gorman that there was no intention to reflect negatively on him. In spite of these reassurances, Mr. Cussen continued to maintain his decision to retire. After then, Mr. Mullins made a motion to congratulate Mr. Cussen on his nomination to the Commission, and Mr. Daly supported the motion. However, Mr. Cussen never changed his mind about his intention to retire from his position.

The Chairman, Mr. Forde, B.L., Messrs. O'Gorman, Brazier, and McCarthy (Leap) were appointed to prepare evidence and designate witnesses for the Commission after additional deliberation. Furthermore, the following individuals were selected to serve as witnesses. Canon

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Barrett made a motion, which was supported by Mr. J. Barrett, that the committee should make certain that the burden of rates, which would be lightened for bigger farmers and ranchers, would not be passed onto the small farms.

Mr. Brazier, who was still a member of the Cork County Council and Chairman of the East Cork Farmers' branch, made a persuasive argument for the admixture plan before the Commission in December 1929, according to a report that was published in the "Tralee Liberator." According to his argument, the consumption of malting barley had drastically fallen as a result of the high excise charges that were placed on stout and whisky. As a consequence, just fifty percent of the barley that had been farmed in the past was required. He stressed that if an alternative market was not discovered, the tillage area would decrease, which would result in an increase in the number of people who were unemployed. He went on to say that the plan, if implemented, would significantly enhance the quality of food that is provided to animals.

According to a story that was published in the 'Kerry Champion' in the same month, Canon Barrett, who resided in Blarney, Cork, said that he was in a minority of one when the Executive decided in support of de-rating. Barrett made this statement when speaking at the last meeting of the year for the Cork Farmers' Union. He was still of the opinion that de-rating was a kind of ridicule, a form of deception, and a trap. The amount of money that the individual farmer was required to pay for public services was the most crucial issue for him to consider. The Churchill way of de-rating was seen to be absurd for this nation by Mr. Patrick Belton TD, who was one of the specialists on de-rating, and who also possessed a large

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

farm of his own. He came to the conclusion that if rates were converted into taxes, the farmer would be required to pay a higher amount. There would be a rise in the cost of living as a result of taxation, the bonus for public service would be raised, and the men who work in agriculture would be searching for greater earnings. Because of this vicious spiral, there would be complete and utter bewilderment. The most essential thing that needed to be done was to reduce the fees that the farmers were required to pay to a level that was more acceptable. It would be best for them to start at home and convince the County Council, in which they had a majority of seats, to carry out the business of the county in a manner that is at least somewhat acceptable. There was a comment made by a delegate indicating that they were able to do so.

When asked about it, Canon Barrett answered:

"I doubt it, and I doubt if they ever would. There can never be anything but excess, notwithstanding the fact that you have 68 individual members hailing from very tiny districts, each of whom is in a position to take money from the common budget with them. They pretend to be concerned with the economy, yet the very structure of their organisation compels them to be wasteful."

According to the "Cork Examiner," Mr. T. Corcoran, M.C.C., the departing Chairman of the Executive of the County Cork Farmers' Union, presided over the annual general meeting of the Executive of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union, which took place in February 1930 at the Imperial Hotel in Cork. After a year of hard effort, the Chairman saw that the organisation was in a very healthy and sound shape. He observed that the previous year had been full of major events, and that it had been an interesting year

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

overall. Although groups in other counties had not fared as well, the standing of the County Cork Farmers' Union had significantly improved during the course of the year. The members and the branches that they represented, as well as the organisation as a whole, benefited from this, which reflected good on the organisation.

The membership subscription fee had been decreased by around twenty percent the year before, with a maximum subscription established at one pound. This resulted in savings of up to fifty percent or even one hundred percent in some instances. This resulted in an increase in the number of people who joined unions inside the county. The Abattoir Company was available on call at short notice and was paying interest on the loan of £1,800 that the union had loaned to them. The union had a total of £225 in the bank at your disposal. Taking all of these aspects into consideration, the Cork Farmers' Union was in a better position than it had ever been before. It was with great pride when the Chairman stated that they had been successful in convincing the congress to have a session in Cork during that particular year. It was clear that Co. Cork was an important bastion for the IFU, as shown by the fact that the Congress visited the city. He anticipated that there would be delegates from a number of counties, including Donegal, as well as other locations in the north and far west. There were preparations in place to provide them with a warm welcome, with the goal of ensuring that they would depart with a favourable view of Cork city and the people who lived there.

A total of two government commissions had been constituted during the course of the year, and they were actively working to address issues that were of critical importance to farmers. The Grain Commission was

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

conducting an investigation into the matter of combining domestically produced grains with maize from other countries, and a substantial amount of material had been given from a variety of sources. This had brought to light the importance of purchasing locally produced goods, which had gained popularity in the media and among the general population. With complete faith that the panel would meticulously report on the evidence, the Chairman expressed his confidence. A second commission had been established in order to handle the de-rating of land, which was a subject of much greater significance. This commission was concerned with the de-rating topic. In order to gather evidence, this panel solicited testimony from a number of public groups, including the Farmers' Union, which was the most influential organisation in agricultural affairs. During his speech, the Chairman underlined the perilous state of agriculture and the urgent necessity for de-rating in order to prioritise its interests. He referred to a remark made by the Kerry and Clare associations, which provided an illustration of the significant burden that farmers bear. He expected criticism from organisations such as chambers of commerce and urban district councils, but he reminded them that they were all dependent on the farmer. He accepted that they had a responsibility to safeguard themselves, but he considered that people who advocated for de-rating were trying to avoid putting the weight on others who were unable to pay for it.

According to Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, the cost of non-tariffed items had approached their pre-war levels, and in certain instances, they had even dropped below those levels. In his presentation, he offered a summary of contract pricing at public institutions, stressing the cheap costs for cattle, mutton, potatoes, and other agricultural items. This was in

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

contrast to the quadrupled rates and taxes, as well as the tripled transportation charges. Between April and November of 1920, agricultural exports had a total value of £20,483,000; however, the amount of money that farmers got for these items was much lower. The government was chastised for their expenditures, and he issued a challenge to the Department of Agriculture, demanding that they show realistic answers on a farm that was fifty acres in size. He emphasised the inarticulate character of the agricultural community and their struggle to realise the advantages of their effort by stating that de-rating was an important issue in the Free State and that it would likely be determined by a general election. He also said that the decision would likely be made by a general election.

The Secretary indicated in his annual report that the Union was in a healthy condition in 1929, both in terms of the number of members and the amount of money it had available. More than twenty percent of the branches reported that their membership had increased since 1928, indicating that there had been a rise in membership. The Cork Farmers' Union had moved its commercial operations to the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing, Ltd., which was founded to enable the co-operative selling of farm products. The value of the company was shown in its first year of operation demonstrating its effectiveness. Beginning on June 1, 1929, the Union's primary emphasis was on boosting the general circumstances of farmers as well as improving their standing as citizens and ratepayers via various means. The construction of a cattle market in Cork city was made possible as a result of the participation of the Union; yet, the success of the market was contingent on the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

agricultural community being free from the influence of petty interests.

In his report, Mr. Murphy, the Organiser, underlined the consistent support and gratitude received across the county of Cork. He acknowledged the role that the Union played in reducing the burdens that farmers faced and improving agricultural conditions. In addition to Mr. O'Gorman and Mr. McCarthy, Mr. D. P. Forde, B.L., put up the idea that Mr. T. Corcoran should testify in front of the De-rating Commission. The gathering was reminded by Canon Barrett of the need of ensuring that the weight of responsibility was not transferred from bigger landholders to smaller landholders, and he emphasised the necessity of conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the evidence.

A proposal was made by Mr. McCarthy, Drinagh, suggesting that Mr. Corcoran continue to serve as their representative for another year. Following some debate, this proposal was accepted. Following Mr McCarthy's decision to withdraw his candidature, Mr Forde was subsequently established as the new chairman of the executive, and Mr T. J. O'Donovan, T.D., was chosen as the vice-chairman of the executive. The position of treasurer was re-elected to Mr. A. Mullins, and Messrs. A. J. Magonnis & Co. were re-appointed to their positions as auditors. The Chairman and Secretary were chosen to serve as representatives on the National Executive, and numerous delegates were elected to serve in Congress. An adjournment was carried out at the end of the meeting.

According to an opinion piece published in the "Cork Examiner" in June 1930, the city was surrounded by its hinterland, which was known as Cork County. The cattle, butter, bacon, general agricultural products, and

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

manufactures that were produced in this county earned it a well-deserved reputation. The manufacture of tractors alone was responsible for the employment of more than seven thousand people in Cork, which was home to a very successful industrial industry. In addition, more than two thousand people were working in the textile sector in both the county and the city of Cork. Other important industries were general engineering, wheat milling, the trade in dead flesh (including the curing of bacon), the manufacture of footwear and furniture, the production of furniture, the production of chemicals (including fertilisers), printing, stationery, soap, yeast, hosiery, down quilts, and margarine, amongst others. According to the report, a particularly noteworthy achievement was the accomplishments of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir Co., Ltd., which had been created a few years before and was wholly owned and operated by farmers, without receiving any kind of help from the state. Along with its considerable export trade in animals and its own insurance fund, this corporation claimed an annual turnover in dead flesh that over £100,000, in addition to its other significant export traffic. The intellectual viewpoint of the Cork farmer, which this firm exemplified, was claimed to be the source of the importance of this enterprise.

The 'Southern Star' stated that Mr. D. P. Forde, B.L., who was currently the chairman of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union, presided over a meeting of the Executive of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union that took place on a Saturday in the month of July 1930. The meeting proceeded to deal with the following motion, which had appeared on the agenda for the meeting of the 17th May and had been adjourned, in the name of the Very Rev. Canon Barrett, P.P.:

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

"That this Executive, with a view to the promotion of retrenchment of national and local expenditure, resolves to establish an Economy and Vigilance Committee with power and function as follows: (i) to examine national and county estimates and suggest possible means of economy; (ii) to scrutinise Press reports and information from private sources regarding the action or inaction of representatives in local circles and in the Dáil; (iii) any other kindred matters referred to it from time to time by this Executive. It is expected that the committee would have a total of five members and would report directly to the Executive. Members of the Dáil or local Councils would not be able to be members of the Committee."

Prior to proposing his motion, Canon Barrett expressed his gratitude to the members of the Executive for the resolution they had passed during the last meeting in which they congratulated him. It was not uncommon for them to have divergent points of view; he had firm convictions on some issues that were not shared by the majority of people. As he had more time to reflect about these issues, his opinions became more firmly established. Among these points of view would be the notion that derating would be detrimental to the farmers, and that the most effective remedy would be to reduce employee levels. Regarding the documents that Mr. O'Gorman had brought to the meeting, Mr. O'Gorman stopped the meeting by calling a point of order and asking Canon Barrett whether he was speaking in favour of his motion. The Chairman came to the conclusion that Canon Barrett was appropriate. In addition, Canon Barrett proceeded by adding that his resolution supported what he considered to be the genuine answer to the problems that the farmers were experiencing. In his opinion, a huge number of farmers had been led on a fruitless pursuit of a would-o'-the-wisp known as

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

derating. He thought that this had been perpetrated against them. Documents that were supplied by Mr. O'Gorman revealed a half-truth that was significantly enlarged upon. When it came to the issue of derating, there was another perspective. If the rates were removed, the funds that are required for the operation of the public services would have to be collected via other methods of taxing. It was their responsibility to determine if the money was to be collected from the community in an equitable or inequitable manner, as well as to determine where the money was going to come from. As far as he was aware, there had been no effort made to respond to the statement that he had made, both verbally and in writing, which said that derating would result in an unfair allocation of public funds. That it was public money should be kept in mind at all times, regardless of the means by which it was gained. Despite the fact that he had read the testimony that was presented to the Commission hearing by a few of the witnesses from Co. Cork, he had not witnessed any attempt to bring before the Commission the instruction that was unanimously adopted by the Executive. This instruction stated that the burden should not be removed from the shoulders of the large individual and placed on the shoulders of the smaller individual, who was already carrying an excessive amount of responsibility.

When Mr. O'Gorman interrupted once again, he said that Canon Barrett was not in order; nevertheless, the Chairman reaffirmed that Canon Barrett was in order. After that, Canon Barrett continued by saying that he had mentioned derating since it was suggested as a solution to the problems that the farmers were experiencing. He considered it to be something that was designed to draw attention to those problems, particularly those that were affecting the small farmers. Reductions in spending, both

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

on a municipal and national level, were the true remedy for the problem. He suggested the formation of a committee consisting of five individuals.

The proposal was supported by Mr. Appelbe, who said that the establishment of such a committee was very desirable. This was the objective of the Farmers' Union when it was initially created, and it had been successful in accomplishing its goals. Despite the fact that the majority of the most influential members of the Farmers' Union were also members of public boards, he did not believe that it was possible to expect them to sit in judgement on either themselves or their fellow councillors. He was of the opinion that setting up such a group would have been beneficial to them in the long run. In a speech that he delivered in Mullingar, Mr. Hogan, who is the Minister for Agriculture, had urged for economies in the reduction of rates and taxes. The creation of the committee that was suggested by Canon Barrett had been a step in the right direction throughout the whole process. The motion had been backed by Mr. Murphy, who said that the County Council ought to have been urged to call Canon Barrett to speak them on principles of economy, which had been required in every aspect of the situation. With the backing of Mr. O'Gorman, Mr. R. Daly had expressed his approval of the motion, expressing the hope that it would have been beneficial to the economies of both the local and national levels. According to him, he had hoped that the Canon would have been capable of serving on the committee. Following an extensive debate, a poll was conducted to choose the location of an event, and Dunmanway was chosen as the location of the event, rather than Clonakilty or Skibbereen.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

According to the 'Southern Star' the monthly meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union that took place in November 1930 was a particularly active one. Mr. Forde presided over the gathering. Additionally, Messrs were present. J. Barrett, J. Murphy, J. D. Gash, W. Appleby, L. Sweeney, P. Long, T. Donovan, M.C.C., D. Minihane, J. W. Fahey, E. Love, Matt Twomey, W. Downing, J. O'Sullivan, M. Buckley, T. J. Spillane, P. Crowley, J. Murray, W. Dromey, J. Dromey, P. Stanley, P. Coakley, J. O'Sullivan, S. Bowen, H. O'Sullivan, D. Cronin, E. Wall, D. P. Lehane, P. McCarthy, W. O'Driscoll, J. Buckley, T. Dorgan, P. O'Donovan, M. Donovan, J. Santry, D. White, T. Healy, B. W. Brasier, Stephen Murphy, A. Mullins, and P. Halliden (a future TD). In a letter, Mr. M. Barrett communicated his appreciation for the warm wishes that were sent by the Cork Farmers' Union and its Executive. Their generosity was greatly appreciated by everyone. His support for the farmers' cause was unwavering throughout the speech.

The Chairman of the Board discussed the organisation's financial situation and said that it was satisfied to a certain extent. To further enhance the organisation, he asked its members to maintain their support of its efforts and to attract new members. Both the economic difficulties that farmers are experiencing and the need of resiliency were recognised by him. The decrease in prices for stock and goods was examined, with maize hitting a low of 3s. 6d. per cwt. without any signs of recovery in sight. For the purpose of addressing the issues that farmers face in common, the Chairman emphasised the need of collaboration and solidarity among farmers.

Discussions proceeded on a variety of subjects, including losses incurred by cows as a result of sterility and abortion, "blockers" at fairs, relief measures for farmers, and worries

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

over the price of road maintenance. Throughout the whole of the discussion, the need of organisation and alleviation from the responsibilities that might be experienced by farmers was emphasised. The Economy and Vigilance Committee was responsible for presenting a report that advocated for adjustments to several Acts and a decrease in expenditures that were not essential. The study also suggested measures to reduce the load that is placed on farmers. A review of the Criminal Injuries Act and the implementation of measures to reduce expenditures at both the national and municipal levels were among the recommendations of the committee. Following the conclusion of the meeting, a decision was made to convene the subsequent meeting in December, as well as plans for future action. A statement of sorrow was made by Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, M.C.C., Fermoy, over his absence. In addition, talks were made about the distribution of graves in the new cemetery, and it was decided that a delegation would speak with Canon Barrett on concerns pertaining to consecration. With a feeling of purpose and a commitment to confront the issues that farmers in Cork were now experiencing, the conference was declared to have come to an end.

The last gathering of Cork Farmers' Union Executive that year was held in the Imperial Hotel in Cork during the meeting that took place in December 1930. Mr. D. P. Forde, B.L. served as the meeting's chairperson. Delegates were present in numbers that were typical of the whole.

During the course of the previous month, the Chairman of the Farmers' Union had said that he had received a complaint from a senior member of the organisation. This complaint was received in his official role as Chairman of the CFU. Although the member had sold eleven calves for

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

a total of £123, the buyer had withheld the price of £2 for luck without asking the seller. This was done without consulting the member. The member had not been opposed to bestowing a 'lucky penny,' but they had been opposed to bestowing an excessive amount of 'luck money.' That the idea that the buyer had the authority to decide the luck coin that should be kept back should not be upheld was something that he had maintained. Following a thorough examination of the situation, the Chairman had suggested that the Executive Committee make a commitment to provide this member with moral support in the event that he pursues legal action. It was important to them to uphold the notion that when they sold animals, it was up to them as sellers to determine how much of a luck coin they would give.

In the event that the member was defeated in court, Mr. J. O'Donovan believed that they needed to provide both financial and emotional assistance to the individual from the organisation. When asked about it, the Chairman had reacted by stating that in this particular scenario, they would not be defeated since it was impossible for them to be defeated. In addition to stating that this was becoming a very severe situation at many of the fairs, Mr. Healy had put forth a suggestion that was seconded by the Chairman. All of the members of the group agreed to pass the resolution. The Secretary had read a letter from Mr. Timothy Corcoran, which informed the Executive that he was recuperating from his sickness. The message was met with cheers from the Executive. Many of the members had expressed their satisfaction with Mr. Corcoran's progress and had stated their desire to see him participate in their activities once again in the near future. In accordance with the decision made by the Executive, the Chairman, the Secretary, and Messrs. Brassier and Fahy were selected to

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

serve as delegates at the next annual congress of the IFU, which was scheduled to take place in Limerick on the 8th of January the following year.

A proposal had been presented by the Bandon Branch, which proposed that the Abattoir Company would not be allowed to accept any pigs in the future, with the exception of those that were provided by members of the Farmers' Union whose subscriptions had been paid for the current year. According to the explanation provided by the Chairman, the Standing Committee had made the decision to postpone the consideration of this resolution until after the annual meeting of the shareholders of the Abattoir Company. Following the suggestion made by Mr. Healy, which was supported by Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, the recommendation was chosen to be implemented. The Secretary had read a letter from Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, who had expressed agreement with the desire of farmers across the province for an effective organisation to preserve their interests. The letter was in reference to the resolution that was presented for the foundation of a new Farmers' Association in the Munster province. On the other hand, he had proposed that before moving forward with the establishment of such an organisation, there need to be a congress of the Farmers' Union held in Dublin, with representatives from each and every county in the Free State. A statement made by the Secretary indicated that the National Executive had given their approval to the motion's fundamental point of view. There were a few farmers' organisations in Munster that were well-organised and eager to work together with the organisation in Cork to build a regional organisation that would be accountable to the central organisation in Dublin City. Co. Limerick, for instance, might serve as the location of such a federation's headquarters. There were, it was claimed, at

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

least two well-organised associations that were eager to collaborate.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE CFU'S EXECUTIVE

MEETINGS 1931-1933: A STORM

BREWS

In his presentation to the annual meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union, the Chairman of the organisation indicated the possibility of establishing a new organisation of Munster farmers, according to a story that was published in January 1931 by the "Cork Examiner." In order to debate the proposal, delegates from all of the several counties gathered together, as stated by the Chairman. In reference to tariffs, the Chairman said that any party should have exercised caution prior to putting into operation a system of general tariffs. This was due to the fact, he said, that an imposed tariff would have increased the cost of the specific product to the consumers, who would include the farmers. Examining the merits of each individual case was the only method that could be considered risk-free when it came to approaching requests for tariff impositions. While addressing the gathering, the Very Reverend Canon Barrett ascribed the current state of affairs among farmers to the fact that during the boom time, they had achieved a level of living that, in the altered circumstances of today, they had attempted to live up to. This was the reason for the current state of affairs among farmers. They had been riding the lofty horse, and now, he claimed, they were unable to dismount from their position. In addition to the unanimous approval of the different reports, tributes were offered to the departing Chairman as well as to the Secretary. Additionally, the new Chairman, Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, T.D., was admitted into the organisation to the delight of the audience.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

At the March 1931 meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, Mr. Cronin proposed the following resolution on this subject:

"We considered that direct representation in An Dáil was essential to the best interests of agriculture, but we were not in a position to declare that we would contest the forthcoming General Election to secure direct representation from Co. Cork until we knew what funds would be placed at our disposal to finance a campaign. We resolved, therefore, to take immediate steps towards the creation of an Election Fund, and we invited our members and every other farmer in Co. Cork to show their earnestness in seeking direct representation by contributing towards that fund. A little from each would aggregate to an amount sufficient for the purpose of the election. Unless the required amount was forthcoming within a reasonable time, we would be compelled to forego the contest."

They felt, Mr. Cronin added, that the time had never been more opportune for the farmers' party to go forward for election. The embarrassment they would suffer would be far worse than it had been during previous elections if they did not get adequate funding. It was seconded by Mr. Fahy. Using the argument that they had not received any direction from a National Executive about the topic, another member put up a clearly negative proposal. He was able to see that the selection of an independent farmers' party by the Munster regional council would not serve any purpose that would be beneficial to the farmers. In addition to providing support for Mr. Von Kohn, Canon Barrett made a reference to the earlier attempts that had been made to elect a Farmers' party. According to him, these efforts had resulted in a significant amount of tension and had a negative impact on the commercial side of the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Farmers' Union. Following a show of hands, the motion put forward by Mr. Cronin was approved by a vote of 18 to 1. It was communicated by the Secretary that the Standing Committee had reached a consensus on a charge of £1 for the purposes of the election fund using a value of one pound. They should have received all of the subscriptions by the 31st of May, at which point they would be able to determine whether or not they would proceed. It was decided to go with this suggestion.

During the same month, in a letter to the editor of that paper, Michael Jordan, a TD for Wexford, wrote that the 'Irish Independent' stated that the bacon curers had abandoned the idea of making an application for a tariff on bacon "in view of the discussion which took place at a recent meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union, where opposition to the tariff was expressed and the general absence of interest displayed by the farmers generally." He said that:

"if the bacon curers held the very definite view which I had been led to believe they held, I was surprised that the discussion referred to should have influenced them to the extent of withdrawing their application. The farmers of Wexford showed no sign of lack of interest in the matter, as far as they were concerned. The farmers of Wexford had requested that I submit an application on their behalf, and I was in possession of a memorial that had been signed by many hundreds of my fellow farmers. The memorial requested that I go before the Tariff Commission and argue in favour of a tariff on their behalf. I had the intention of carrying out this task, regardless of the course of action that the bacon curers may follow. In addition, the Wexford bacon producers had requested that I create the application of their products. To the people who are responsible for the bacon

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

curers, I would politely urge that they should rethink their choice."

In late March 1931, a very positive report of the directors of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing, Ltd., for the year 1930, stated:

"The financial results of the year's working were even more satisfactory than those of the previous years. Generally, there was a considerable increase in the volume of business transacted compared with 1929. They handled approximately 17,000 more animals. Their cash turnover amounted to £18,000, and the total value of their trading reached the very respectable total of £80,000. The Company was congratulated on having attained a very high position among the trading concerns of the Free State in the short period of but three years, and they had reason to feel hopeful that they would be able to report further expansion year by year. The initial difficulties which invariably beset a cooperative commercial organisation had been largely overcome, and they were satisfied that the Company was now firmly set on the road to complete success. The number of consistently loyal supporters was growing very large, and it could be inferred that they were giving complete satisfaction to those people. As it became more widely realised that the Company's returns for live and dead stock over any given period were better than were obtainable elsewhere, their clientele would naturally become greater and greater; and as their turnover increased, they could give still greater satisfaction. More especially could this be the case in purchasing such commodities as coal, manures, and fertilisers for distribution, as they could buy at much keener prices for larger quantities.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

We have made the decision to break from the practice of publishing comprehensive information on the operations of the Company in the annual statement of accounts for reasons that would be readily apparent; nevertheless, we would happily provide any information that may be necessary at the next annual public meeting. With any luck, you would agree with the choice that we made. The amount of two hundred and fifty pounds was put aside throughout the course of the year 1930 for the purpose of being distributed as a bonus to shareholders who had fulfilled their obligations during the twelve months that concluded on November 30, 1930, and who had complied with the instructions that were written in the bonus book that was sent to each shareholder."

They declared, that, if they had been able to lay up a greater amount, they would have been able to do so; nevertheless, they had to pay significant costs in order to construct a cold store, a bacon curing cellar, a bacon store, and to expand the facilities for the slaughter of pigs and calves. It was predicted that the expenditures that would fall under the category of "Additions" would be rather low this year, and they projected that a sum of one thousand pounds would most likely be available for bonuses if the circumstances remained the same throughout. They would thus encourage shareholders to have deliveries of animals for the Company documented in their bonus book on each occasion of delivery by the relevant official at the slaughterhouse or through the branch delivery in their region. This would be done in order to ensure that the company received appropriate compensation. During the process of verifying the financial books for the purpose of calculating the time remaining until November 30th, they had sufficient faith that no one would ask for an extension of the time that was allotted, since they were not in a

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

position to provide any kind of extension. In this context, they would point out that it was feasible for individuals who were not yet shareholders to acquire shares of the Company. Furthermore, it would be in the best interest of every shareholder, they believed, to encourage individuals from outside the Company to become shareholders, since the expansion of the shareholders' circle would result in an increase in the amount of business conducted.

The amount which had been written off as depreciation in premises and plant for the year had been in part invested, and they were awaiting a favourable opportunity to invest the balance. With the approval of the general meeting, they proposed paying a 5 percent dividend on the paid-up capital and to withdraw such sum as they could afford from the current account for investment in a general reserve. They expected it would be possible for them in every future year to transfer a fair proportion of the profits which may accrue to this general reserve, which would give them a liquid asset for utilisation in any emergency. In comparing the assets at the end of 1930 with those at the start of operations on January 21, 1928, it would be seen that the opening assets in building, plant and machinery amounted to £4,172 10s. 6d., and that the present assets in building, furniture, equipment, plant and machinery amounted to £7,923 12s. 10d., after writing off £1,413 7s. in depreciation. In addition, they had investments valued at cost £1,498 17s. They had actually expended £3,172 0s. 4d. in additions to building, plant and machinery, and the abattoir was now almost complete in every requisite to perfection. The balance sheet showed, they asserted, that the financial position was very much so sound.

Immediately after the end of the annual meeting, an extraordinary general meeting of the Company was

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

conducted at the same location. During this meeting, the resolution that is outlined below was presented to the Company in the form of a special resolution. It would be submitted for confirmation as a special resolution to a subsequent meeting, which would be held at the Company's Offices at Anglesea Street, Cork, on Saturday, the 11th day of April, 1931, at twelve o'clock noon. If the resolution was passed, with or without modification, via the necessary majority, it would be submitted for confirmation. P.J. Manley, a young founder member, was praised for his energetic role in the development of the project to this stage. The resolution stated:

"That the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing, Ltd., now registered under the Companies Acts, 1908 to 1917, be and is hereby converted into a Registered Society in accordance with the provisions of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1893."

The project was intended to become a fully fledged co-operative society during the expansion process.

At the May meeting of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union, Very Rev. Canon Barrett, P.P., Macroom, mentioned that in Co. Cork there had been 85 landowners with over 500 acres each, and they would have received £600 each from the government's Budget; whereas those with valuations of less than £1 would have received between 4d and 8d each. However, they would have to endure a sugar tax to make up the dole to pay the 85 others. He deemed it a shame that the poor should be burdened to provide doles for those at the top. He criticised the Budget as unjust for allocating that money and continuing the old agricultural grant. Mr. D. R. O'Gorman, Co. C., also expressed that the Budget was unjust. Swedish matches could be landed in Co. Cork

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

duty-free from 7s. to 9s. a cw., and the Government was imposing an additional 1s. duty, depriving the very poor of what was a necessity of life. He believed the Government could have given complete relief and effected economies without the need for the tax on petrol. Mr. Barrett argued that the tax on sugar was an unjustifiable tax, especially when levied on the poor. The petrol tax would hit the agricultural community hard due to the large amount of petrol used for the conveyance of agricultural products. The Chairman, Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, T.D., remarked that he was certainly not in favour of imposing burdens on the agricultural community, without ensuring that facilities could be granted for their needs at cheap rates.

An 'Irish Independent' representative, as per a July 1931 report in that paper, inquiring into a statement made at a meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union that imported bacon was being extensively smoked in the Free State and then branded "Best Irish Smoked," was informed by the Department of Industry and Commerce that they allegedly had no knowledge of such a practice. The official stated that complaints about the matter were constantly being published, but no concrete case had been reported to the Department. An official of Messrs. Jas. Leigh, Ltd., bacon curers, Mary's Abbey, told the 'Irish Independent' representative that, while foreign bacon was being sold in the Free State, it was impossible for it to be sold as Irish bacon. The Political Correspondent of the 'Irish Independent' wrote that if foreign bacon were being imported, smoked, and sold as Irish, there were adequate means to deal with the situation under the Trade Marks regulations. The Government was not at present perturbed about the dumping of bacon, nor did they intend to put a tariff on that article. Should the dumping of foreign foodstuffs or articles under subsidy occur, the matter would

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

receive serious attention, but there was no reason to contemplate such dumping. Not long prior, he stated, there was an outcry against the dumping of German oats under subsidy, and in a few weeks, the matter righted itself without any Government intervention. The imports of bacon and hams for 1930 amounted to 359,886 cwts valued at £1,614,902, and the exports were 315,225 cwts valued at £1,831,319. In the 26 weeks ended July 26, 171,171 pigs were purchased in Ireland. The number in the corresponding period of 1930 was 608,799, and of 1929, 647,460.

The 'Kerry News' also reported in July 1931 that, at the request of the Cork Farmers' Union, Senator O'Hanlon called a meeting of persons interested in the pig breeding industry in the Irish Free State to consider the question of unrestricted imports of bacon, subsidised in some instances. They discussed the feasibility of making a joint application of all concerned to the Tariff Commission for investigation. The meeting was held in the Oak Room, Mansion House, Dublin City. Furthermore, at the meeting of the regional Co. Cork Council of the Industrial Development Association, a letter was read from the Cork Farmers' Union, stating that at a recent meeting of their committee, substantial proofs had been advanced that foreign bacon was being smoked in Cork city and subsequently branded as Irish.

The 'Southern Star' report of the October 1931 CFU meeting shows the contentious topic of annuities eventually raising its head. At the meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, the Secretary read a letter received from Mr. Medill, Secretary of the Munster Farmers' Association, outlining the policy of the National Centre Party and requesting delegates to the latter's Dublin

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

convention. Mr. Cussen (hon. Secretary) reported that he and Mr. Fettle had attended the meeting of the Munster Farmers' Association in Limerick. They found, from the course of that meeting, that they could not usefully intervene on behalf of the Cork Farmers Union because the general course of the discussion was futile. They believed the Cork Farmers' Union could support the policy outlined by the Centre Party. Both Mr. Forde and himself decided it was unnecessary to call a special meeting to send delegates to Dublin to the convention held the previous day. Forde corroborated these remarks. They did not find themselves in agreement with certain views put forward, but the efforts of those attending the meeting appeared to be sincere. They differed with them regarding ways and means by which they intended to realise their objectives. There were certain differences of opinion about the Centre Party in the Dáil. In Co. Limerick, the feeling of the meeting was to contest the next election as an independent party. At the present day, with the farmers engaged in a desperate struggle for existence, it would be better for all farmers, they claimed, to work unitedly and consolidate their strength in one organisation, instead of having people here and there throughout the country with their own ideals, that could not always be maintained when confronted with the actual situation at hand. Mr. O'Corman expressed agreement with the action of the delegates to the Limerick meeting. He believed that Mr. Forde or anybody else would be living in a 'fool's paradise' if they held the idea that the majority of the farmers were satisfied with the actions of the Farmers' party in the Dáil. He had always maintained that the farmers would be best served by an independent party. He then referred to what he termed "the scandal in connection with the Shannon scheme" and "the misconduct of the E.S.B., who kept no account of a matter of two million." They had the absurd

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

statement from a member of the Electricity Supply Board in Co. Cork that £2 million would mean no extra taxation, whereas when the farmers asked for a matter of £700,000, they were told it would shake the State to its foundations. He believed that the sooner they constructed an independent party, the better it would be for the farmers of the country.

He advocated outlining a policy for that party, which was something they had never done before, so the party had no policy to follow. Mr. McCarthy deplored criticism of the National Centre Party, seeing as how their own political party no longer existed. The Co. Executive approved the action of the delegates to the Limerick meeting. Mr. Brazier stated that the Farmers' Party could not be blamed for the Shannon scheme, because the Government had already committed to being responsible for it before the Farmers' party had joined them.

The following resolution was sponsored by the Aghada branch:

"Because of the severe depression that is currently affecting the agricultural sector, farmers are discovering that it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide the fundamental necessities of life after paying annuities, rates, and taxes."

Therefore, they suggested ,it was of the utmost importance that the burden of annuities be alleviated for the time being by either granting a moratorium for a period of two years or by addressing the issue in any other feasible manner that would enable farmers to survive the current struggle. Mr. Russell, who proposed the adoption of the motion, stated that it was not necessary to emphasise the depressed state of agriculture or the nearly impossible

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

difficulties that the farmers were expected to face if they intended to continue. They would be in a really precarious situation, he believed, if they did not get some aid sooner. He was of the opinion that the Free State was gradually but undoubtedly heading in the direction of an imminent bankruptcy. It was the greatest level they had seen since the war time, and they were living on an income that was earned at rates that were comparable to those that existed before the war. Those who were in possession of capital maintained their standard of life on that money, while others were forced to sell their stock. The issuance of a moratorium was a significant challenge, he recognised, but it was one that could be overcome if it was approached in the appropriate manner.

Mr. Brazier, who was the seconder of the motion, said that a moratorium would be of immediate advantage, not to the farmers who did not pay their land annuities, but rather to the plain and honest persons who had worked hard in the past to pay their way. As far as Mr. O'Corman was concerned, he expressed the deepest sympathy with the resolution. What was right about the farmers in Aghada was also right about farmers in every other part of the nation. In spite of the fact that he did not provide any commentary about the prospect of the moratorium being granted, he suggested that the resolution be sent to Mr. Cosgrave and Mr. Blythe in order to demonstrate to them what the nation was thinking. The question of what would happen to the bondholders was posed by Mr. Lehane, and a delegate responded by mentioning the ongoing situation in Northern Ireland. Although the Chairman said that he was unsure whether or not a moratorium would provide them with any benefits, he stated that he would approve the last portion of the motion. When Mr. McCarthy asked, "if Fianna Fáil got into power and sought to retain the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

annuities from the Irish Government, would the farmers organise and tell them that they would not pay the annuities to them any more than they would to the British?" he was referring to the fact that the conditions in his own district were so bad, that farmers did not have any seed oats or potatoes for the following year. If somebody did not come to their aid, he claimed, they would be forced to stop production because they would "go wallop." Mr. McCarthy was referring to the attitude of the Fianna Fáil Party towards land annuities. Mr. Forde said that lowering the amount of money that the government spends may be a viable idea for assisting farmers. The nation was now living over its means, and there should be a reduction in the amount of money, he suggested, spent by the government. It was unanimously decided to approve the proposition.

According to the 'Southern Star,' at a meeting of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union in November 1931, presided over by Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, TD., the following item was considered:

"To determine whether the Cork Farmers' Union would officially participate in the forthcoming general election by nominating and supporting candidates to contest the election on behalf of the Union. If participation was decided, necessary arrangements for the selection of candidates and financing the election campaign would be made."

The topic had been given extensive study by the Standing Committee, which unanimously supported Mr. O'Gorman's proposal to participate in the election. Mr. O'Gorman noted that the matter had been given considerable attention. During the gathering that took place in Fermoy, it was brought to everyone's attention that

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

the agricultural community was the most populous in the nation, accounting for at least 65 percent of the total population. Furthermore, they were the ones who produced the riches of the country, and it would be an understatement to say that the land was responsible for seventy-five percent of the wealth that the nation possessed. In spite of the fact that the Farmers' party had not provided them with satisfactory outcomes in the past, a single setback did not constitute a loss. Any party that they would now put up on their behalf ought to be independent, ought to keep its independence, and ought to fight on its own independent programme. The country was unable to afford the national and local expenditures that were more than what was being spent. When contrasted to those who worked to create anything, it is quite unlikely that they would find such a large number of people who did not produce anything in any other nation. While the Revenue Department employed four times as many people as it did during the period of British control, there were also a significant number of individuals working in the army, pensioners of advanced age, the Executive Council, and the Civil Service. The expenditures made by the nation, they cried, had been too extravagant. He was in favour of a Farmers' Party, but he believed that it ought to be an independent party. As long as it maintained its autonomy, the Farmers' Union was a powerful organisation that was present in almost every county. The proposal of merging by Mr. Gorey and Mr. O'Hanlon, which was made without consulting anyone else, was the first blow of independence to the organisation, it was claimed. At that moment, faith was severely damaged, and the last blow was delivered when Mr. Heffernan joined the celebration.

Mr. R. Daly, M.C.C., seconded the statement that the East Cork Executive had unanimously suggested that at least

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

one candidate should be put up for each seat. He expressed his agreement with the recommendation. Mr. B. W. Brasier, M.C.C., who was in favour of the motion, said that if the farmers were serious about their decision, they needed to demonstrate their full support for the candidates who were put forth. It would've been necessary for all farmers to give their full support to them, since they would be competing against two groups that are very large and strong.

A further debate ensued, during which the Very Reverend Canon Barrett, P.P., Macroom, expressed his opinion that he considered it was not a good idea to run candidates representing farmers. His opinion was that it was more unwise than it had ever been before. When it came to their reputations, the farmers would not run for office if they had any respect for themselves. At some point in the past, throughout the course of certain investigations, there were a few individuals who testified on behalf of the farmers, and made such a fool of themselves, that everyone ought to feel embarrassed about them. It was his contention that the Farmers' Union was more of a disorganisation than an organisation, by virtue of the fact that it was comprised of seventeen different organisations. However, he was of the opinion that the farmers were not in a position to engage in political conflict at the current time. He reprimanded the farmers for choosing the most noisy individuals to lead them, wittily remarking that the containers that were the most empty were the ones that produced the greatest noise. The seventeen organisations, in his opinion, should be disbanded, and those who were making a lot of noise should be told to go home and take care of their farms. Mr. McCarthy (Drinagh) said that it was high time for the farmers to take charge of their own lives and establish themselves as the people of the nation. He said that the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

major political parties were likely to move farther with partnerships, and that the Farmers' Party may find themselves in a tough situation as a result of this. The position that Mr. Appleby promoted was contrary to that of Canon Barrett, who argued for entering the political arena. Canon Barrett was challenged by Mr. T. Corcoran, M.C.C., who said that they would not accept dictation from either Dublin's Jim Larkin, or Canon Barrett of Macroom. It was emphasised by him that farmers made up seventy percent of the producers, while the other thirty percent subsisted from them. He criticised the proposed Dwellings Bill for being for the advantage of Dublin slums rather than rural dwellings, and he criticised the Vocational Education Act for being for the benefit of towns and cities, at the cost of those who worked in rural areas.

Although there were calls for a poll to be conducted, the honorary Secretary brought to everyone's attention that no change had been presented. Mr. D. P. Hayes, representing Blarney, put forth a direct opposition to the motion, which was then supported by Mr. P. O'Leary, representing Inchigeela. Mr. V. O'Grady said that it was time to put the nation ahead of the party, just as it had been done in England on previous occasions. The resolution put up by Mr. O'Gorman received 28 votes in favour, while 11 votes were cast against it. A decision was made to carry out the motion. It was decided to postpone the rest of the work, which included picking candidates and making other preparations to compete in the general election, until a later meeting.

According to an article that was published on New Year's Day in 1932 by the 'Cork Examiner,' the agricultural community participated in a vigorous discussion on the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

imposition of a duty on imported bacon that would equal to fifty percent under the Anti-Dumping Act. Due to the fact that the price given to producers for pigs had decreased by such a significant amount over the course of many months, while the price of commodities remained high, the growing of pigs resulted in a significant loss rather than any profit. Considering all of these factors, it should not have come as a surprise that the supply of Irish pigs gradually decreased until it reached an extremely low level. This predicament was ascribed to the fact that bacon could be imported from Poland and other European nations at very cheap rates. Both of these countries are located in Europe. There was at least one instance in which, as a result of a surplus at an English port, this item was sent over and sold at whatever price it could fetch, which was 8/- per cwt. The average price of this commodity that was delivered in Cork for a period of time had fluctuated from 35/- to 25/- per cwt.

In an interview with a "Cork Examiner" representative, Mr. Cussen, the ever-energetic honorary Secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union, a body, as previously shown, being greatly interested in the subject, stated:

"The bacon industry needed the impetus of a tariff for its preservation. To a large extent, producers had been disposing of their pig stocks during the past six months because of the very low price for pigs and the advancing price of foodstuffs. They despaired of any assistance by way of a tariff or felt that it was being delayed to such an extent that the loss likely to be suffered could not be recovered. However, we had been encouraging producers to remain in the business, as we had a shrewd idea that a tariff would eventually ensue. We advised our shareholders and farmers in general to put in the largest stocks of pigs and simultaneously lay in a stock of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

foodstuffs," the statement reads. Because of the fact that a significant number of farmers took advantage of this advise, they found themselves in a very beneficial situation at the present time. Furthermore, they would undoubtedly be fully compensated for any losses that they had sustained during the period of depression that the industry was experiencing.

Reports indicate that outside County Cork, pigs were very scarce, and it was highly likely that the protected industry would now be in a position to pay a much-enhanced price for supplies. It was very regrettable that those farmers who cleared out their herds did not have sufficient confidence in the government's good sense to await the result of the consideration of the case for a tariff. If they had done so, the agricultural industry as a whole would have been placed in a favourable position due to the profits that would have been realised in pig production."

When a representative from "Examiner" conducted an interview with the head of a well-known bacon curers company, the individual said that the increased responsibility came as a significant surprise but was very much appreciated. He said:

"A duty of some sort was absolutely necessary, as for several months the situation had been very serious, entirely due to enormous over-production by Denmark. Prices of all kinds of bacon on the English market had consequently been reduced, and substantial losses had been incurred by Irish farmers. We considered it essential that farmers should get some encouragement to keep producing pigs, as the situation was likely to change altogether in the coming year with the Danes realising the situation and reducing their hog supplies to a degree that would yield them a fair profit. Irish farmers had reduced their stocks considerably, and if there were no

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

pigs to meet the increased demand across the Channel, it would be a tremendous loss to this country. For that reason, we welcomed the new duty, though we felt it would not be necessary after a few months, as the price of the Danish product would show a significant increase. The export market would be affected for the next few months, but we believed it would recover afterward. Without this duty, we were practically convinced that there would be no pigs in this country for export purposes next autumn. Now, farmers had a great incentive to increase their stocks. We anticipated that there would be enough pigs to fully cater for the home market, which would naturally show a significant increase immediately. Currently, a large proportion of live pigs were being exported, which was bad from the bacon curers' perspective. We were not employing our full quota of hands at the moment, but we hoped that in the near future, we would handle many pigs that had been exported alive. This would allow us to provide more employment at a higher rate of wages, accruing additional benefits from the duty."

According to Mr. J. Murphy, who was the proprietor of the company John Murphy and Sons, Evergreen Bacon Factory, the emergency tax would prove to be beneficial to the bacon industry. He bemoaned the fact that the tax had not been implemented sooner, since it would have avoided the decrease in pricing for Irish manufacturers if it had been in place in August, according to him. To the best of his knowledge, there would be no tariff in place if the price rose over seventy-five pounds per cubic metre, which meant that it only offered protection up to a specific limit. He was aware that the tariff did not apply to Empire goods, which meant that a nation like as Canada may dump bacon in Ireland and then obtain supplies from the United States, or, over the border. Due to the fact that they imported more bacon than they exported, he was of the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

opinion that a tax ought to be imposed on everything that was not produced in the Irish Free State. He proposed that the people of the Empire be allowed to 'take care of themselves' while simultaneously developing their own industries.

On January 23, 1932, the 'Evening Echo' reported that a convention of the Irish Farmers' Party was held at the Imperial Hotel in Cork. The convention was conducted by the Cork Farmers' Union, and it was there that candidates were chosen to represent the interests of the farmers in the next election in the Cork city and county seats. As a result of the request made by Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, T.D., President, who said that he was going forward as a candidate for West Cork, he chose not to preside over the Convention proceedings. Mr. W. J. Fahy, Vice-President, presided over the proceedings. In all, there were 150 delegates present, each representing a different branch of the Union which were located across the county. After some time had passed, it was revealed that the following contestants had been picked out of everyone who applied:

- Mr. Timothy Corcoran, M.C.C., could be found in Cork City.
- Mr. D. L. O'Donovan, M.C.C., was the choice for East Cork.
- Mr. D. Vaughan, T.D., was located in North Cork.
- Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, T.D. was the candidate in West Cork.

In order to be considered for the position, each and every applicant signed the following pledge:

"I pledge myself that if selected as a candidate and elected as Deputy, I would feel bound to sit, act and vote in the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Dáil in accordance with the policy of the Irish Farmers' Union as may be decided from time to time by the Executive Committee and Congress."

The Secretary, Mr. Cussen, indicated that the election fund was making positive progress, but that more monies were still necessary to support a good campaign before it could be considered successful. It was determined that each constituency should be responsible for financing the campaign of its own candidate, and that a set percentage of the funds collected from each constituency would be paid to a central fund in order to cover the costs of operation for the central offices. In addition, it was determined that rooms would be rented out at the Hibernian Hotel for the sake of the election.

The candidates were the ones that presented their addresses. During his speech, Mr. O'Donovan emphasised how important it is for the current arrangement of everyone to have representation in the Dáil. He made a reference to the tremendous administrative expenditures that the current government was incurring and said that it was essential for the farmers, who had been struck so hard, to have enough representation in order to protect their own fundamental interests.

For the third occasion, Mr. O'Donovan expressed his gratitude to the delegates for their selection of him. He hoped that every single person who was a part of that assembly of representatives would put their shoulder to the wheel and that every single man would do his weight in the election, which would ultimately ensure that their standard-bearers would be placed back in office. On a similar note, Mr. Vaughan made some remarks. From 1922 to the present, he had been representing the interests of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

farmers, and he believed that he had gained the faith of those he served. In the event that he were to return once again, he pledged to be vigilant about the same interests and to work towards the passage of any legislation that would be to the benefit of the agricultural community to the greatest extent that he was able to.

In his remarks, Mr. Corcoran discussed the current state of the economy and how it was affecting the agricultural sector. During the next election, they faced a significant amount of resistance, and it needed them to use all of their efforts in order to ensure that their chosen candidates participated in the election. According to him, there was a glimmer of optimism that the agricultural labourers had finally started to see that their interests were intertwined with those of the farmers, and that they were living side-by-side. He thought that the candidates for the Farmers' party may expect their support at the polls since they had started to open their eyes a little bit. If the farmers and the labourers worked together, they would be a very powerful force in the administration of the affairs of the nation, and they would not have to rely on other people to direct their actions. Following that, Mr. O'Donovan, T.D., assumed the chair, and on the request of Mr. D. Forde, B.L., which was supported by Mr. Kiely, the gathering expressed its condolences to Mr. W.J. Fahy on the passing of his father.

An emergency import of superphosphate was carried out at the Port of Cork by the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society Ltd., as seen in a photograph that was published in the "Cork Examiner" on February 24, 1932. Throughout the course of the preceding several months, there had been a scarcity of such at various locations around the nation. With Society had been a major importer in the Munster province, a

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

non-profit effort by the members, conducted in order to alleviate the pressure at the time.

On March 8, 1932, the 'Cork Examiner' published an article on the passing of Mr. T. Corcoran M.C.C. He was one of the individuals who initiated the formation of the Cork Farmers' Union and continued to be a prominent member of the organisation until his last illness. He sat on the Executive Committee and had a major and practical involvement in beginning the idea that would eventually become the Irish Industrial and Agricultural Fair. In the realm of politics, Mr. Corcoran was a Nationalist of what is now referred to as the "old school." He was a supporter of John Redmond and had, on one occasion, run for the Irish Party in the Mid-Cork seat. The Farmers' Union put him up as a candidate for the Dáil in 1927, and they picked him once again for the most recent General Election; however, he withdrew from the race owing to his poor health. It was noted by the meeting that Mr. Corcoran had a large number of friends, not just in his home county, but also in other areas, and his passing would be deeply mourned by everyone who had the opportunity to know him. Sincere condolences were extended to his family. Senator G. Crosbie then presided over a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Irish Industrial and Agricultural Fair, which took place after that. The news of the passing of Mr. T. Corcoran, M.C.C., who was considered to be one of the organisation's most valuable and esteemed members, was met with feelings of profound grief. With regard to the suggestion put out by Fine Gael's Mr. W. Desmond, T.D., which was supported by Labour's Mr. Hurley, T.C. The members of the organisation expressed their heartfelt condolences to his family in a moment of quiet. At the funeral, it was determined that an official representative would be sent to attend. Immediately

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

after the conclusion of the urgent matters, the meeting was respectfully adjourned.

The annual general meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society was reported on by the 'Cork Examiner' in the middle of March 1932. The report of the Committee of Management of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing Ltd. for 1931 was presented at the general meeting that took place at the Imperial Hotel in Cork on Saturday, March 19, 1932. The report stated that the net profit for the year was £4,028 19s, after taking into account depreciation and other expenses. 3d. The recommendation was made for a dividend of five percent, in addition to the allocation of five hundred fifty pounds for the payment of a bonus per animal that was delivered to the Society by shareholders who cooperated with the guidelines that were outlined in the bonus book that was issued to each shareholder. In the presentation that he delivered, the Chairman indicated that the net profit that the Society had made in 1931 was roughly fifty percent more than the net profit that it had earned in 1930. This positive improvement was mostly attributable to a 25 percent increase in animal turnover as compared to the performance of the previous year. This mismatch brought to light the important practical advantages of fully using their capacity in each and every sector, which ultimately resulted to an increase in net profits per animal that was handled. He highlighted that every shareholder, as a part owner of the accumulated assets and valued goodwill, could take satisfaction in contributing to an organisation that greatly affected the prices that were returned to farmers for cattle. He declared that this was something that every shareholder could do. Prior to the establishment of the Society, producers were unable to reach alternate markets and were thus at the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

whim of dealers and intermediaries throughout this time. It had since been possible for farmers to dispose of their cattle in the greatest possible facilities, both locally and in Great Britain. These facilities informed farmers about the movements of the market and allowed them to reverse their positions with dealers.

Regarding the selling of pigs, the Chairman expressed confidence in the arrangements that were established, which included effective ties with prominent businesses in Great Britain, which ensured premium pricing for continuous deliveries. The value of pigs has grown by at least two times as a result of this. to the cwt. The live weight was higher than the norm. It was possible for the bacon department to provide premium payments for appropriate pigs and lucrative outlets for other pigs because to the weekly demand that was generated inside the department. The reputation of the Society had been developed by careful attention to supply and service for both domestic and international markets. This reputation, he claimed, was reflected in the prices that consumers were ready to pay, which was beneficial to suppliers.

It had been useful to make special agreements with famous Smithfield merchants during the tough circumstances that were present in the early part of the current season. These arrangements had allowed for the avoidance of losses that were suffered by others and the acquisition of prices that were comparable to those for town-killed porkers. As a consequence of this, their rates have been much higher than those associated with other places in the Free State. Throughout Munster, they had constantly stuck to the best market rates, and the rising quantity of porkers that they had handled suggested that suppliers had a growing level of faith in the Society. The next season would see the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

continuation of these agreements, which would also include the selling of lamb. The upcoming opening of their butcher shop was a logical evolution that provided a mechanism for farmers to sell fat cattle and sheep to their best advantage, while also catering to the demands of the people at costs that were acceptable. It was essential for success, he declared, to have support from the general public and the stockholders of the city.

As an additional measure to protect the Society from failure, the Chairman suggested a new credit programme, which would be subject to approval by the shareholders. The plan would include the provision of food items on credit to reliable suppliers under stipulated circumstances. The purpose of this plan was to provide food items at favourable terms while preserving the flexibility of credit, and it was originally implemented on a trial basis before the possibility of growth. It was the intention of the Society to select active agents who would be accountable for specific regions in order to expedite the process of livestock collecting and dispatch. This would include establishing a coordinated system across County Cork in order to improve supply and general service to other suppliers. The success of these endeavours was contingent on the support of each and every member of the Society. In addition to praising the authorities and workers, the Chairman emphasised the Society's limitless potential in terms of creating agricultural techniques that are lucrative. He proposed that the statement of accounts, as well as the reports from the Committee and the auditor, be approved via the motion.

The motion was backed by Mr. A. H. Good, who pointed out that the Society's increasing turnover and animal numbers suggested success, contrary to the fact that the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

previous year had been difficult. The credit system that was suggested for groceries and manures was emphasised by him as a beneficial advantage for all members, which is expected to draw more support. P. J. Halliden (a future TD for North Cork), who expressed his satisfaction with the growing utility of the Society, pointed out that the prices of pigs have remained stable and that national contributions have been made. In spite of the fact that pork exports were on the upswing, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the decline in bacon and gammon exports as well as the growth in imports, highlighting the significance of domestic production. In order to solve the problems that had been occurring with Irish bacon in the past, the slaughterhouse produced goods that were both durable and affordable. He hoped that the business would continue to be successful. Mr. M. Daly, a resident of Kanturk, lauded the administration of the Society and proposed expanding retail operations to rural towns, given that local merchants often overcharged customers in these neighbourhoods. It was possible, he suggested that the establishment of agencies in these locations may make regular delivery easier and could possibly increase commerce.

At the annual general meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union, which took place on January 28, 1932, the departing chairman, Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, T.D., presided over the gathering, according to a report published by the 'Irish Independent.' Opposition to the levy on farm equipment was expressed by the adoption of a resolution. The resolution was moved, which stated:

"We cannot accept the manufacturer's guarantee that machinery would be sold in the Free State at the same price as in England, and we believe this tariff would, in many

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

instances, prevent farmers from properly equipping their farms."

The position and attitude of farmers in politics were discussed, particularly in response to a letter from the Clonakilty branch that took exception to a statement by the hon. Secretary, Mr. Cussen, at Whitechurch. Dr. Nyhan mentioned that Mr. Cussen had suggested farmers should not enter into politics directly, but rather integrate themselves into the two major political parties for the common good of the farming community. He highlighted that farmers who had joined the Cumann na nGaedheal Party became mere voting machines without any real power. Dr. Nyhan questioned whether Mr. Cussen had a mandate to speak on behalf of the farmers, arguing that their political engagement was more critical than commercial interests. Dr. Nyhan continued, expressing his belief that farmers should not be led by professional politicians and should instead aim to be the strongest voice in the country's governance. He discussed the potential impact of removing the empty formula and its significance to farmers, as well as the issue of land annuities. Mr. O'Gorman added that the previous and current Ministers for Agriculture were young professionals from different fields, and he speculated the next might be a dentist. He emphasised that farmers were struggling but would eventually realise their mistakes.

Mr. Brazier pointed out that every party in the State had an agricultural wing, even the Independents in the Dáil, and there were attempts to form an agricultural group. However, due to diverse interests among agriculturists in the Free State, unanimity within the Farmers' Union had not been achieved. He doubted the possibility of a Farmers' Party governing the country under the current

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

mindset of the Irish people. Mr. Cussen clarified that his statement at Whitechurch aimed to suggest that Farmers' Union members integrate into local branches of other parties to influence conditions favourably for the Union. He stated he had no mandate and merely offered this for consideration. The Chairman, Mr. T. J. O'Donovan, T.D., expressed disappointment with the recent election results, noting that farmers as a viable party had disappeared. He suggested that if the current Government and President pursued the removal of the oath and the withholding of land annuities, farmers might need to engage more in politics.

Following the election of new officials, Mr. W. J. Fahy, who hailed from Mallow, was selected to serve as the new Chairman. Mr. K. Wall, who hailed from Crookstown, was chosen to serve as Vice-chairman, while Mr. A. Mullins was re-elected to his position as Treasurer.

A deputation from the Cork Farmers' Union met with the Minister for Finance in Dublin on March 31, 1932, along with the Chairman and Secretary of the Irish Banks' Standing Committee. The purpose of their meeting was to present a scheme that would provide more advantageous credits for agricultural purposes than those that are currently available to farmers. The meeting was reported by the "Evening Echo."

The proposed plan involved a state subsidy and a state guarantee for the repayment of interest and principal on loans amounting to five million pounds. It was urged that the Government should persuade the Irish Banks' Standing Committee to make this sum available for agricultural credit, to be loaned to farmers for productive purposes. The various banks would participate in proportion to their

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

shares in the consolidated note issue and operate the scheme through the ordinary machinery of their branches throughout the Free State. It was believed that if the Government guaranteed the repayment of interest and principal, the banks would be prepared to make the money available at an interest rate not higher than five per cent. Advances could then be made to individual applicants at an interest rate not exceeding three per cent, with the Government covering the difference, which would involve a state grant of approximately £100,000 a year. In addition to paying three per cent interest on their loans, farmers would be required to redeem the capital sum through annual repayments proportionate to the loan term, ensuring total charges not exceeding 5.5 per cent. These terms would be more favourable to agriculturalists than those offered by the Agricultural Credit Corporation. The deputationists emphasised that loans from the Corporation were not being utilised significantly, demonstrating both the depressed state of farming and the excessively exacting terms for the farming community.

It was argued that the subsidy involved in the new plan would provide quicker and more effective assistance to agriculture than any other form of support. The adoption of this scheme would lead immediately to the re-stocking of many derelict farms and the more complete equipping of others not currently operating at full capacity. These outcomes, it was argued, would greatly increase agricultural production and have a significant positive impact on the country's overall prosperity. Similar schemes in Denmark and Germany, they suggested, had proven to be very effective.

The 'Evening Echo' reported in May 1932 that after hearing a deputation from the Railway Workers' Protection

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Association, the Executive of the Co. Cork Farmers' Union unanimously adopted a resolution strongly favouring a definite policy regarding transport in the Irish Free State, and expressing the belief that the present competitive systems of road and rail were mutually destructive, both nationally and economically. The meeting recommended to the consideration of the Government the coordination of road and rail transport as being the most convenient and economical for all sections. The deputation consisted of Messrs. J. N. Bresnan, P.J. Manley, J. Walsh, and W. McGinn. Mr. Bresnan, who acted as spokesman, said they had been expecting the Government to intervene and regulate motor transport for some time. The deputation asked the farmers of the county of Cork to cooperate by utilising the railway as much as possible for the transport of their livestock and produce. He thought the farmers of Munster should make some small sacrifice in the matter. What would happen to the farmers of West Cork if the sections between Clonakilty junction and Clonakilty, and between Drimoleague and Bantry were to close down? The effect would be disastrous for West Cork, and while the employees of the railway company would suffer the most, the farming community would also be severely affected. Twenty-six million pounds of Irish money were invested in the railways, which was an Irish industry, whereas anything related to motor lorries, their rivals in the trade, came from across the Channel. He appealed on behalf of the West Cork railway employees to the Farmers' Union for support in the matter. The question was a national one, and one that the Government should not hesitate to tackle, as the present competition was very unfair, and the result would be disastrous to all concerned.

Mr O'Donovan, T.D., said if the railway men would meet them halfway, the farmers would do their bit. They should

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

ascertain what was being paid to pensioned officials to have the amount of superannuation reduced, and the directors should also be asked to reduce their salaries. The motor lorry service was most essential in West Cork, where there was a very inefficient railway service. He didn't ask for the wages of the railway workers to be reduced, but he thought something ought to be given to their families.

It was absurd, he claimed, to have bus and rail services running parallel to each other, as was the case between Cork and Youghal. Mr. Walsh, a member of the deputation, pointed out that fifteen thousand eight hundred dollars of the county Cork's rates were contributed by the Great Southern Railways Company. If the railways were shut down, the farmers would be responsible for paying the bill. Regarding the pensions, these were forced on the company under the Railways Amalgamation Act, which was a piece of legislation that was the most stupid piece of legislation. Mr. O'Gorman stated that the farmers could not provide any support other than sympathy because farming was not paying. The railway company was completely unable to pay a dividend, and that kind of thing could not continue. It was absurd to have bus and rail services running parallel to each other. He admitted that the bus service was a great convenience for the poor. The solution would lay with the directors and shareholders.

The 'Irish Press' reported that, in October 1932, much confusion prevailed at a meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union in the Imperial Hotel, Cork City, when the programme of a new political party proposed to be formed under the auspices of the National Farmers and Ratepayers' League, came up for discussion. Mr. O'Gorman spoke at length to a motion which he

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

proposed, recommending the League and its objects and constitution to the confidence of the Cork Farmers' Union, and that henceforth the Union be regarded as a County Association of the League to fulfil the obligations imposed on it by the League's constitution. Mr. Carty, Newcestown, objected to the proposition on the ground that it introduced politics, from which they strove to keep the new organisation free.

It was within the scope of the League to put forward candidates for Dáil and Local Government elections. The matter would come up in January. Mr. P. Fahy (Whitescross) stated that they had no business coming there unless they were to be political. The Secretary said that the League was nonpolitical, or was intended to be nonpolitical in the sense that it would have no association with any of the existing political parties, directly or indirectly. Mr. Fahy, the Chairman, stated that it was not the intention of the meeting to start politics at all. Mr. O'Gorman went further than he would wish, but he did not like to stop him. The Secretary (Mr. E. J. Cussen) stated that it had been decided by the League to form a party. It was within the League's scope to put forward candidates for Dáil and Local Government elections. The matter would arise again in the following January.

They were already paying pensions to members of the National Army, he said, and there was a Bill introduced now to give pensions to another army that cost the country thirty or forty million pounds. Mr. D. Vaughan, T.D., said that they should provide for shopkeepers' labourers and farmers' sons. According to Dr. Nyhan, Clonakilty, if he saw anything in this meeting, it was the birth of a new political party to fight the battle of the farmer and the ratepayer. Mr. O'Donovan, T.D., said that they knew they

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

should pay the land annuities, but they wanted to put it up to the government at the moment. There was a demand sent forward from the most recent meeting of the Executive of the Union for negotiations with the sister Kingdom. That question should be settled. They were facing another situation now. They were already paying pensions to members of the National Army, and there was a Bill introduced now to give pensions to another army.

Mr. Canty said that he knew members of the Farmers' Union who attended a booth in his district at the last elections and who canvassed No. 1 votes for the Government or Cumann na nGaedheal Party candidate and No. 2 for the Farmer. Mr. O'Gorman's motion was seconded by Mr. O'Donovan and eventually declared passed. In proposing it, Mr. O'Gorman said the farmers had been made the 'jack-horse' for the rest of the community. They had not yet lost the good-will of England, for whom tens of thousands of their countrymen had died fighting. It was decided to invite Mr. McDermot, T.D., to address a meeting in the Imperial Hotel on Nov. 5, 1932. On the recommendation of the Standing Committee, it was decided to appoint Mr. W. J. Fahy as an additional organiser.

The 'Southern Star' reported in November 1932 that, under the auspices of the National Farmers' and Ratepayers' League, a public meeting was held at the Imperial Hotel, Cork city. Mr. Fahy, Chairman of the Executive of the Cork Farmers' Union, presided, and addresses were delivered by Mr. F. McDermott, T.D., President of the N.F. and R. League, and Mr. T. McCluskey, Cashel. Resolutions were submitted stating that the National Farmers' and Ratepayers' League merited the support of the farmers, merchants, and other

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

ratepayers of County Cork. The resolutions called upon all who desired the prosperity of agriculture and the country, fraternal peace, friendly relations with other countries, and a united Ireland, to join in promoting the policy and objectives of the League. They expressed confidence in Mr. McDermott as President of the National Farmers' and Ratepayers' League and wished him success in the movement he had inaugurated in the interests of the farmers and ratepayers of the country. The Chairman briefly introduced Mr. McDermott to the meeting. Mr. McDermott, who was cordially received, stated in his address:

"By this time, you are all familiar with the origin, objectives, and meaning of this League. The creation of this does not originate from any personal or political animosity, nor does it have any personal or political motivations behind its creation. Regarding any individual or group, we do not have any outstanding debts to pay. Rather than being interested in individuals, we are more concerned with policies and measures, and our organisation has developed organically as a result of the requirements of the agricultural community. Due to the fact that we refuse to be affiliated with either of the two parties, we are the only agricultural organisation that matters. The members of Fianna Fáil or Cumann na nGaedheal, as well as any officials, would not be allowed to appear on our platforms. The strategy of gaining direct representation on local bodies and in the Dáil is one that we have endorsed. In addition to the special service we propose to render to the fundamental industry of this country—the industry from which all other industries derive their hopes of prosperity—we invite all those who approve of a business-like attitude towards political problems, who desire a reduction of public expenditure and the burden of rates and taxes, who have no taste for animosities, whether among

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

ourselves or against other nations, and who believe the time has come to break away from a party system that keeps alive the bitter memories of the civil war, to join us."

The next thing that Mr. McDermott said was;

"I have the impression that the people of this country are not enthusiastic about either of the major parties.' It was impossible for the Irish farmer to believe that Cumann na nGaedheal accomplished enough to alleviate the burdens, expand the markets, and safeguard the profitability of our essential industry, despite the fact that I acknowledge the early successes of Cumann na nGaedheal in saving the nation from chaos. On the other hand, the catastrophic damage that he is enduring at the hands of their successors is nothing compared to the lethargy and self-complacency that he endured as a result of Cumann na nGaedheal. The condition of the agricultural community is appalling in highly protected America and relatively free trade England, and the problem of changing this state of affairs is baffling statesmen everywhere. I have never failed to point out that the farmer's misery is not confined to this country; economic conditions are against him all over the world. I have never failed to stress this point in any speech that I have given on this subject. The Fianna Fáil government in Ireland, on the other hand, was presented with a chance that has never been presented to any other government, either in this country or anywhere else, in order to establish a solid foundation for agriculture. This is a reference to the Ottawa Conference. It is without a doubt that, if it weren't for the issues that were brought up in connection with the Oath and the Governor-General, as well as our refusal to honour agreements made by previous governments, we would have been able to obtain an exclusion of foreign agricultural produce entering the English market, which would have been a boon to both

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

ourselves and the British farmers. This would have been made possible by the British government's desire to strengthen friendly relations with this country and to bring the Republican element within it into harmony. The outcomes of the Ottawa meeting have left the British farmers feeling quite dissatisfied. Despite the fact that the British MPs, who were influenced by industrial interests, failed to take proper account of the interests of their farmers, they were unable to find anybody to advocate for their case. We should have been able to achieve a position that is superior to that of all other nations and other parts of the Commonwealth, who consume a far less share of manufactured products from the United Kingdom than we do. Our legislators have squandered a wonderful opportunity and have produced a circumstance in which British farmers are compelled to engage in activism in order to maintain the availability of our goods despite the pressure of competition."

As an additional point of interest, Mr. McDermott stated:

"Our government is struggling ineffectively, by the expensive method of bounties to enable us to compete in the British market." In the event that our position in it continues to deteriorate, it is quite probable that farmers would be left without a means of subsistence or the financial resources necessary to fulfil their duties. We have been informed that the situation would be altered as a result of the release of funds that are now being held in the suspense account; but, the government is keeping the specifics of how, when, and why this event would take place well under wraps. As part of their commitment, they promised to use these funds to implement a plan of agricultural derating at the General Election. I have high hopes that they would not make any effort to implement it in a manner that is less beneficial to

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

the agricultural community. It ought to be the responsibility of the League to make certain that any effort of this kind is unsuccessful."

The vague stance of the government was another point of contention for Mr. McDermott, who again noted that:

"It is incredibly challenging to get a clear idea of the policy followed by the government. They tell us that there is a war on the economy, and that it is our responsibility to boycott items made in the United Kingdom and to destroy England's industrial machine. On the other hand, the government does not make use of its authority to fully exclude British products from the market via tariffs. It is not the case that they have severed the link between our monetary system and that of Great Britain, nor do they sell the several millions of pounds worth of British stocks that they own. The sale of British securities is not something that they advise or require Irish people to undertake. To what kind of a battle are we now engaged, and what kind of triumph are we hoping to achieve? Would we want to reintegrate ourselves into the British system and economy, or would we rather go our own ways? It is the government's business to be unclear. The constitution and the economy are two areas in which nobody is aware of what they stand for. The question is, are they ministers of the Republic or the Crown? Do they support the rule of the majority, and are they willing to protect it against intrusion by military forces? Is it their desire for our export commerce to continue to flow to England? Or do they want England to fall into disrepair? Which of these two outcomes would be more beneficial for our nation? Which of the following do they support: private ownership, state ownership, independent business, or socialism? In the event that the present measures do not bring about success, they always hint to plans that are in reserve. Is it possible that

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

they have such intentions, or are they just making up things in order to keep the Communist faction of their followers quiet? Mystification is something that I am sick of, and I believe that the nation is as well.”

McDermott concluded by analysing the political stance of the Fianna Fáil Party on various issues. Regarding markets, he asserted:

"If the Government is earnest about building a good home market, they should give us all confidence and courage, protect us from political turbulence, dissociate from Communistic threats, reduce taxation and rates, give us a rest from politics, attract capital into the country, and encourage those already here to circulate it and start new enterprises. None of these approaches have ever failed to provide satisfactory outcomes. You would bring pleasure and prosperity to Ireland if you add to these things the development of good relations between all different classes and nations. One of the names for this city is Rebel Cork. I have high hopes that it would live up to its name by defying all of the curses that are afflicting our nation, including but not limited to: greed, pettiness, contempt for the plighted word, intolerance, cant, aggressive language, filthy accusations, ignorance, sloth, and the spirit of destruction. We shall establish the groundwork for actual freedom and well-being by doing things in this manner."

After Mr. McDermott's talk, the Chairman stated that Mr. McCluskey, Cashel, would be giving a speech. Mr. Beechinor, who was from Kinsale, stepped up and asked:

"What is the magical solution to the problems that are plaguing the agricultural sector? According to Mr. McDermott, there is no treatment available. To open up the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

English market and get rid of tariffs, is that the goal? In regard to the Senate, he made yet another declaration, many of which may be subject to debate. You accused the other individuals of not removing the Senate from existence. Allow them some time. They received a mandate to do away with the Oath as well as a directive to maintain the land annuities to which they are legally entitled under the law. A mandate to do away with the Senate was not something they sought. However, it is possible that they may be granted that mandate at the subsequent general election, which would allow them to first cut the size of the Senate and eventually eliminate it entirely since it is a body that serves no purpose. I would be extremely grateful if Mr. McDermott were to provide the solution to our problems."

Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, M.C.C., raised a point of order and stated that Mr. Beechinor should be ruled out of order. Those who wished to clearly understand Mr. McDermott were able to do so with loud applause. Mr. McDermott stated that he would be delighted to answer any questions at the end of the meeting; however, because these questions had been asked, he would answer them immediately. "I am not a quack or a charlatan," he said, "and therefore do not go about claiming to have a panacea. However, I would tell you my first step, which is to win the by-elections and remove the government from power." This was welcomed with tremendous applause from the audience.

It was stated in January 1933 by the "Cork Examiner" that the Cork Farmers Union (CFU) was actively engaged in assisting the organising efforts of the well-known Fr. Finlay. The Reverend T. A. Finlay, S.J. presided over the annual meeting of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, Ltd., which was held at Plunkett House, Merrion Square,

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Dublin. The gathering was attended by a great number of people, including Mr. MacNeill, who had previously served as Governor-General under the previous administration.

Father Finlay made a suggestion that the Society should document their grief and the loss they have experienced as a result of the passing of Sir Horace Plunkett, the President. He remarked that it was unnecessary to exalt the merits of their buddy who had passed away since his contributions to Ireland were well recorded and would be remembered by future generations. In his remarks, he acknowledged the great loss that they had suffered and lauded Sir Horace for his unwavering commitment and unwavering focus in his endeavours. During his seconding of the motion, Mr. V. Moloney said that he had been a supporter of their President for the last thirty years, and that he regarded him as one of the most remarkable persons that Ireland had ever produced. Sir John Keane also expressed his gratitude to Sir Horace for the great amount of assistance he had offered to Ireland and to agriculture.

It was also mentioned specifically in the article about the death of Sir Horace Plunkett. Plunkett, it stated, was the person who started the movement in 1889, established the national Society in 1894, and supervised, promoted, and directed it from the time it was first established until the time he passed away. The Millvale Co-operative Creamery, the Freshford Co-operative Society, the Co-operative Society, and the Co-operative Society were all names that were mentioned in the report. Both the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing, Ltd. and the Cork Co-operative Egg and Poultry Society were involved in the business. In addition to that, it indicated the reappearance of one society, which was known as the Toam Credit

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Society. The entire turnover of the societies, excluding the Credit Societies and the I.A.W.B., Ltd., was £5,978,266 in 1931, which was much lower than the total turnover of £6,606,476 in 1930. This was because trade data were excluded from revenue. The Agricultural Societies' revenue for the year 1931 was about £18,208 more than the revenue for the year 1930. Due to the fact that there was no growth in the creamery member plan, there was no evidence of an increase in the number of credit societies. Subscriptions totalled £526 7s in the previous year. A decrease in comparison to the previous year's average, which was a reflection of the decreased returns from the agricultural sector.

In the process of moving forward with the acceptance of the report, the Chairman admitted that they were going through a moment of significant stress that is typical all around the globe. One could have anticipated, he believed, that there would be a greater expansion of the movement, but this had not been the case. In the past, the efforts of the staff had been concentrated more on preserving the vitality of organisations that were already organised, rather than on establishing new societies. In a recent conversation, Father Finlay noted that a friend from the United States had inquired about the distinction between Communism and co-operation. The co-operative group, he observed, was one in which membership was entirely voluntary, and it was contingent upon each individual making use of the resources provided by the group for their own personal gain. Contrarily, in a communist society, each individual member was required to take part in and contribute to the group's continued existence. As the precise antithesis of communism, the co-operative movement was founded on the philosophy of self-sacrifice, which included the utilisation of resources for the growth

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

of the individual. In closing, Father Finlay made the observation that despite the fact that the report was rather depressing, they had achieved some headway for the agricultural community while they were working on it. During his seconding, Mr. R. A. Anderson made a plea for enhanced allegiance to, and support of, the national body. Appropriate applause was given in support of the proposition.

Mr. R. A. Anderson was then chosen as President, and Father Finlay was elected Vice President, on the basis of a resolution that was made by Father Finlay and supported by Mr. Moloney, from Limerick Junction. The suggestion that it would be desirable for the societies to be able to be self-sufficient and independent of any external body or government was made by Father Crowley (County Cork), who was speaking in response to the resolution that had been proposed to maintain the same level of contributions. Father Crowley, who was proposing a vote of gratitude to Dr. Kennedy and the staff, lauded the staff's effectiveness and devotion, pointing out that they did not spare any effort in order to serve the Society's interests. In response, Dr. Kennedy indicated that it would be beneficial for the organisation if every society had handled its business in the same manner that Drinagh, West Cork, had done.

Reports from the "Southern Star," "Cork Examiner," "Irish Press," and "Irish Independent," as well as the actual meeting minutes, indicate that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Cork Farmers Union Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society took place at the end of March 1933. Despite the fact that the overall performance of the year's trading met the expectation of improvement and validated the opinion stated the previous year that the peak had not been achieved, the firm noted that the rising

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

tariff war made the obstacles that were already present much more difficult. This information was included in the report that was approved at the annual meeting of the Cork Farmers Union Abattoir and Marketing Co., Ltd. In addition, it was mentioned that the net profit for the year was £5,045 and that a dividend of 5% was declared.

In his speech to the bacon department, the departing Chairman, Mr. T. O'Sullivan, expressed his disappointment that the live export trade had been impeded by international obstacles. Nevertheless, there was a fantastic chance for the development of the bacon department, and he was thrilled to see that the department's primary product was achieving success in Liverpool and Glasgow, demonstrating a consistent weekly growth in sales. They placed an emphasis on the significance of the domestic market and made it their goal to serve it in as many different lines as they could. Nevertheless, they were looking forward to resuming regular business operations with their ties in Britain and were looking forward to doing so. Additionally, Mr. G. B. Freeman, who was also a V.S., was appointed to the position of Chief Veterinary Inspector for cattle, sheep, and pigs. Mr. H. W. Robinson was appointed to this position. Furthermore, there was a notable decline in the number of people who were jobless in the Saorstát, with 1,307 fewer people being unemployed on March 27 compared to March 20, and 3,116 fewer people being unemployed compared to March 13. They were 82,035, 83,000, and 85,840, respectively, according to the data. Patrick J. Manley, who was still a young man at the time, was promoted to the position of vice-chairman of the corporation.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

After that, in July of 1933, the 'Irish Press' published an article stating that the CFU Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society was a founding corporate member of the Bacon Curers' Association. This information was disclosed at a meeting that took place in the offices of the Limerick Chamber of Commerce.

Admittedly, it seems that media coverage on the CFU dips from Autumn 1933 onwards, but that would all change the following year. During this time, branch membership, and the number of branches, continued to grow.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE CFU 1934-1936: THE LEAGUE OF YOUTH, MILITARISM & ANNUITIES

At this point in time, the CFU began to exhibit a degree of militarism; nonetheless, this was not a direct manifestation of the organisation's changes. It was the responsibility of the Blueshirts, who were formally referred to as "The League of Youth," to take direct action on matters pertaining to the CFU. Cussen and Manley, who were the chair and secretary of the CFU, served as the principal agricultural representatives on its Co. Executive, despite the fact that it was formally different from the CFU. Therefore, it was essentially an extension of the union, which was the Cork Executive. Manley and Cussen may be said to be directly responsible for the annuity campaign, but they are not completely responsible for it. This was mirrored in the role that the Blueshirts played in the organisation. If anything, this technical disparity between the two organisations provided it with the same type of plausible deniability that Provisional Sinn Féin and the PIRA had during the 'Troubles.' It was also during this time period that the Blueshirts tore up rails throughout County Cork during this time period, under the supervision of the CFU. The railways were the most common mode of transportation for animals that had been captured. Due to the fact that the CFU's activities were forced underground, official reports of the organisation became less common in the media. The main branch office of the Abattoir & Marketing Society, which is located on Anglesea Street in the city heart of Cork, faced repeated raids, which resulted in a significant amount of inconvenience. Additionally, during this time period, they were engaged in other activities, with Cussen sitting on an

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

agricultural commission and Manley becoming an honourable member. He was the hon. Secretary of the Cork Milk Producers' Association, and he would go on to become the Honourary Secretary of the Irish Milk Producers' Association. He was successful in his efforts to push Dr. James Ryan, the Minister for Agriculture, to create the statutory Cork Milk Board. During this time period, however, Manley was taken captive, Cussen and Fahy were taken into custody, and a large number of other farmers from a variety of regions in the county were also taken into custody.

On March 7, 1934, the 'Cork Examiner' published an article stating that General Eoin O'Duffy, the first leader of Fine Gael, then known as the United Ireland Party, had arrived in County Cork, as a component of a trip that was being organised. The visiting delegation includes individuals such as E.J. Cussen, who represents the Cork Farmers Union, and Packie Manley, who represents the Blueshirts, who were once known as the League of Youth. Both of these individuals are mentioned on the list. Dr. Cohalan, the well-known Bishop of Cork, was also present at their meeting.

In the middle of March, the Annual General Meeting of the Cork Farmers Union was held at the Imperial Hotel in the city of Cork. After being suggested by B.W. Braiser and supported by E.J. Cussen, Patrick J. Manley was chosen to serve as the chairman of the meeting. While addressing the gathering, Manley pointed out that the current economic situation had become very precarious, and that the only way to effectively communicate the concerns of the farmers to the government would be to take a level-headed and pragmatic approach to the problem. Following the onset of the Great Depression, the CFU had reestablished

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

its branch presence, and it was once again at the height of its previous grandeur, with over 120 branches spread out over the city and county.

According to reports published in the 'Evening Echo' and the "Cork Examiner" on March 31, 1934, Mr. T. T. O'Sullivan, who was serving as chairman of the organisation, presided over the third ordinary annual meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union, Abattoir, and Marketing, Ltd., which was held at the Imperial Hotel. B. W. Brazier, C. O'Connor, P. Foley, and J. Brazier were among those who were there. The following individuals were involved in this study: von Kohn, M. Twomey, F. Walker, J. Byrne, M. Downing, T. J. Healy, M. Corkery, V. Horgan, T. Crowley, D. Gavan, V. Byrd, P. Fahey, J. Riordan, and J. Wood. Members of the Committee of Management comprised the Chairman, as well as Messrs. M. O'Sullivan, W. Appleby, P.J. Manley, F. McEvoy, R. Wall, and Mr. Cussen.

The Chairman gave a presentation on the report that the Committee of Management had prepared for the year that ended on December 31. It was stated in the report that the multiple difficulties that the society was confronted with were the cause of the large decrease in net earnings that was seen in comparison to the previous year. The shareholders were well aware of the obstacles that were present in the agricultural export trade, and they were also aware of the influence that these issues had on the operations of the society, notably in the export of cattle and fresh meat. 1935 saw a volume of animal exports that was less than ten percent of the amount that was exported in 1934. Despite the fact that there was a significant growth of 400% in domestic market commerce in comparison to the previous year, this gain was not enough

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

to compensate for the decrease in export trade. On the other hand, given the circumstances, it was deemed acceptable to conclude the year with a credit balance, and it was anticipated that the members would be satisfied with the outcomes. It was underlined in the study that it is essential to concentrate on the production of bacon and the processing of by-products. Without this emphasis, the life of the community would have been put in jeopardy as a result of the negative consequences that the economic war had on cattle exports. The society was able to offer an independent market for producers as a result of this diversification, which prevented the producers from falling back into a position of dependency for themselves.

In spite of the fact that it had only been in operation for three years, the Bacon Curing Department had already accomplished a great deal. Beginning with a modest production, the department had made significant investments in establishing public faith in the quality of their goods, which ultimately resulted in a demand that was equal to their capacity. Despite the fact that turnover in the Economy Shop was not included in the report, the considerable rise in sales in the home market was a testimonial to the efforts that they had put out. It was predicted that the bacon business in the Irish Free State would soon be structured in order to regulate pig supply, pricing, and sales. This was done in recognition of the society's strong position in the market. The restructuring of the sector was essential because of the constraints in the domestic market and the restrictions placed on bacon exports to Great Britain. These restrictions necessitated the implementation of timely safeguards in order to avoid possible excess problems.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Throughout his speech, the departing Chairman outlined the challenges that were encountered throughout the course of the trade activities that took place the previous year. The punitive tariffs that England put on animal exports led to a large reduction in the live pig shipping trade, which resulted in a considerable loss of vital linkages in Birmingham and other locations in Great Britain. Both the Society and the suppliers were negatively impacted as a result of this. In the beginning of the year, there was a discernible decrease in the domestic market, which was most likely caused by the economic difficulties that were impacting the agricultural community. However, the demand for the Society's goods remained robust until the beginning of the year. The imposition of heavy taxes on pig and hog products, as well as a ban on cattle and veal, had a significant and negative effect on the Society's export trade in fresh meat. It was difficult to compensate for this decline by participating in activities related to subsidiary businesses. In spite of the fact that there were intentions to create a Poultry and Egg Department, the decision to do so was postponed because of contemporary trade risks. Nevertheless, the Society was investigating the possible advantages that may be gained from the cold-stored egg trade. Because of the goal of the government to restrict the export of wool skins in order to foster the growth of the trade in the Irish Free State, the Society had been contemplating the possibility of participating in skin processing. The Minister of Agriculture had the intention of ensuring that the bounty on exported calf skins was beneficial to farmers. In order to achieve this goal, the Society had filed for and been given registration as Exporters. It was then decided that PJ. Manley, who had already been chosen chairman of the CFU, would also be elected chairman of the enterprise.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

The miserable economic circumstances that had befallen farmers by this time were laid out at the annual general meeting of the Cork County Committee of Agriculture, which took place in August 1934 (the Marsh's Yard attack, at which Michael Patrick Lynch died, occurred this same month). Cussen was appointed as an independent member of the committee at this meeting. However, the meeting also highlighted the positive effect that the CFU Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society had on the agricultural sector in Munster. According to the 'Cork Examiner,' the meeting was conducted in the County Council Chamber of the City Courthouse in Cork city centre, and the chairman who was stepping down, Mr. T. O'Sullivan of Cloughduv, presided over the proceedings. Some of the individuals that were there were Messrs. D. L. O'Gorman, M.C.C., I. Crowley, M.C.C. (Banteer), and D. O'Callaghan, M.C.C.; J. B. Barrett, M.C.C.; R. Daly, M.C.C.; B. W. Brasier, M.C.C.; J. O'Connor; J. Corkery, M.C.C.; John Daly, M.C.C.; M. Twomey; W. Ryan; B. Cooney; W. J. Roycroft; P. F. O'Driscoll; W. Murphy; T. T. Healy; and E. Cussen.

Mr. O'Gorman lauded Mr. O'Sullivan as a farmer who was both practical and knowledgeable about the requirements and capacities of the agricultural community, when he proposed that Mr. O'Sullivan be re-elected as chairman. In addition to praising Mr. O'Sullivan's reputation and the quality of his cattle, he emphasised the significance of the committee in the county and brought attention to the experience of appointed members such as Professor Boyle, Mr. Halliden, and Mr. Cussen, all of whom had made major contributions to agriculture in the area. The expectation that Mr. O'Gorman stated was that the committee, with Mr. O'Sullivan's direction, would be able to come up with a plan that would assist farmers in

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

regaining their financial stability. For the purpose of confirming Mr. O'Sullivan's status in the agricultural industry, Mr. Brasier seconded the resolution. A unanimous vote of approval was given to the motion, and Mr. O'Sullivan, in his response, said that he is committed to performing the duties associated with the position. In the next step, Mr. Crowley put up the idea of electing Mr. T. T. Healy to the position of Vice-Chairman, noting his extensive expertise in farming. The proposal was supported by Mr. R. Daly, and it was also approved unanimously. Mr. Healy expressed his appreciation for the successful outcome.

Meetings of the committee would take place at 12:30 p.m. on the second Saturday of the month, as was established by the committee. While addressing the list of wages, Mr. O'Gorman brought attention to recent compensation reductions that were mandated by the government. He also proposed that the Secretary communicate with the Minister in order to get clarity on the current basis for salary bonuses and how they are paid. The members of the committee reached a consensus that the Secretary ought to get this information. There were plans to hold a short series of lectures in Dublin on plant diseases, pests, fruit and vegetable types, and the Department asked that the committee send their lecturers. The correspondence from the Department suggested that these particular arrangements were forthcoming. A symposium on horticulture development and extension was also planned to take place in Saorstát, according to the Department of Agriculture.

The next item on the agenda was to evaluate a suggestion made by the committee that was leaving, which was about the maize admixture plan. The committee considered that

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

this scheme was detrimental to farmers and stock-feeders. They suggested that the newly formed committee come up with an alternate plan that is in line with the policy of the government on the utilisation of grains produced at home. Concerns were raised by Mr. Cussen over the high cost of foodstuffs, which may have an adverse effect on the profitability of bacon pig production. Additionally, he pointed out that the admixture system did not provide major benefits to grain producers. He provided a thorough account of the increasing production costs and proposed that limiting maize imports and implementing rationing among feeders depending on the number of animals may be an effective way to promote the use of locally produced grain and to boost tillage. He advocated for the establishment of a sub-committee with the purpose of drafting an alternate plan.

The proposal was backed by Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Brasier approved of the notion while expressing his disapproval of the high expenses associated with the existing maize admixture. Mr. O'Gorman remembered the objection of the Cork Farmers' Union to the combination and recommended permitting free maize imports while enabling farmers to mix it themselves. He considered that this would be beneficial to the farmers. The subcommittee, which consisted of Messrs. Cussen, Barrett, and O'Connor in addition to the Chairman, was burdened with the responsibility of addressing the proposals made by Mr. Cussen as well as the motion made by Mr. O'Gorman.

With regard to the production and sale of pigs, Mr. Cussen emphasised the need of access to financial facilities for the purpose of assisting farmers in the development of pigs for the production of bacon. It was his suggestion that the pledging of chattels should be made legal in order to give

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

farmers with the required credit. He also recommended a mechanism to enable this via the use of a statutory board, which would provide protection and fair pricing. In order to facilitate future development, the committee sent Mr. Cussen's sketch to a sub-committee for consideration. Within that particular fiscal year, the Department had stated that they were ready to refund at least fifty percent of the actual expenditures that the committee has made on lime and sea sand programmes.

It was stated by the hon. Secretary that the committee that was leaving had already set aside monies for lime and sea sand for the year. Although some individuals supported the use of sea sand on the basis of local preferences, Mr. Brasier raised concerns about the economic sustainability of the programme, implying that lime is more advantageous. Following a debate, the committee came to the conclusion that lime would get £600 and sea sand would receive £45. The committee would take into consideration the applications at the subsequent meeting in order to determine the amount of subsidy that would be granted to each applicant.

According to an article that was published in the "Cork Examiner" on January 5, 1935, Mr. E. J. Cussen, the honorary secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union, noted that the true importance of a government trade deal lay in the fact that it had the ability to open the way for a pact that would offer larger tangible advantages to the agricultural community. He considered that everyone should be delighted with its formation for this reason alone, despite the fact that there were other reasons to celebrate. If the ban on cow imports to Great Britain had been allowed to continue, the government would have been forced to get rid of between 50,000 and 80,000 animals by some

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

extreme means in order to ease the burden that the excess had produced for the industry. There was a possibility that in addition to the destruction of the corpse, no other technique might have been discovered.

Yet, it seemed that things would not go as planned. It was stated by the 'Irish Press' that on January 28, 1935, Patrick Heskin, who lived on Anglesea Street in Cork, was taken into custody at the Union Quay Garda station which was located in the city centre slaughterhouse of the Cork Farmers' Union. It was recently announced by the director of the Company that Mr. Heskin's name was included on a manifesto in the capacity of acting Secretary. The Cork Farmers' Union, providing an overview of the goals of the new platform, which would subsequently be introduced at a convention that would take place on a Thursday, being the following day, at the Arcadia Hall in Cork. The newspaper stated that they had reason to suspect that the arrest was linked to potentially seditious remarks that were made at a farmers' conference that took place in Aghada not too long previously, and it was learnt in the company. It had also been reported in Co. Cork that twelve or fourteen other individuals, all of whom were farmers, were arrested in the Midleton region, in connection with the same gathering. When he was brought into prison, Mr. Heskin was at that time performing his responsibilities as hon. Secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society. He was doing so in lieu of Mr. E. J. Cussen, who was absent due to a major illness that he was experiencing. Everyone who was now being held in prison would, as far as everyone knew, would be hauled before the newly introduced Military Tribunal. According to a letter that was sent by a representative of the 'Irish Press,' Cussen, who was serving a six-month term in the Curragh Prison as an alternative to paying a fine of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

one hundred pounds, was freed on payment of a reduced fine by the end of June. Cussen was the main hon. Secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing Co., Ltd. However, despite the fact that the Military Tribunal had given Mr. Cussen and the other defendants fourteen days to pay, they all decided to go to jail instead. The decision to pay a fine that corresponded to the amount of his term that had not yet expired was made by Mr. Cussen after he had completed about two and a half months of his sentence. It is generally accepted that the sum was something in the vicinity of sixty pounds. The Military Tribunal had handed down sentences to six farmers, and he was one among them.

It was also reported that, even if there was a possibility that values could temporarily decrease owing to the market's incapacity to absorb the additional supply, the restoration of a market for practically the entire supply of store cattle and a much larger percentage of fat calves promised a significant amount of relief. It was brought to Cussen's attention that the British store cattle market had been experiencing a downward trend over the course of the previous six months, despite the fact that there were limited supply. However, the improved prospects for feeders should have proved to be favourable as the Spring season approached, and he expressed optimism that the market for Irish storage cattle would be spurred by the increased profits earned by English feeders. This was a positive development, he believed. He also had high hopes that the subsequent discussions between the two governments would result in a change of the punitive tariffs, and one day they would be eliminated entirely. Without the removal of these severe trade restrictions, it would be difficult for Irish farmers to make a positive contribution to the economic growth of their nation. This

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

was because, it was claimed, they would almost certainly incur losses in their agricultural activities. Once the agricultural community was firmly established on an economic footing, able to meet domestic and social commitments from income rather than capital, and labour was reabsorbed on the land, every section of the population would be expected to benefit from the improved standard of living in the rural community. This would primarily be the dichotomy for the agricultural community. On the other hand, if tariffs were allowed to remain in place and every commodity that was sold by farmers brought in less than the cost of production, he warned that, then agricultural bankruptcy would unavoidably follow, bringing the nation to an inescapable state of calamity.

It was stated that a significant number of directors and shareholders were present at the annual general meeting (AGM) of the CFU's Abattoir and Marketing Co-operative Society, which took place in April 1935. During the course of his address, the chairman mentioned that the company had encountered a great deal of difficulty over the course of a considerable amount of time throughout the year. At one point, it appeared as though they would finish the year in a position of "line ball." The consumer demand on the domestic market was low, and they were unable to sell their entire surplus in the British market because of the relatively small sub-quota that was allotted to them. In spite of this, they eventually established a presence in markets other than the domestic and British markets, which turned out to be quite beneficial throughout the months of summer and fall. Their desire to offer stockholders with a larger outlet for pig supplies had to be put on hold because of the constant rise in weekly kills that occurred as a consequence of their growth in all markets.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

This continued until they had hit their maximum capacity, at which point they were forced to halt the progress. As a result of the fact that the production of bacon for the year was one hundred percent more than the production for the previous year, the chairman expressed his happiness.

A considerable amount of focus had been placed on the prepared meats department, which had been outfitted with cutting-edge machinery for the purpose of making a wide range of items of extraordinary quality. There was also a consistent rise in production in this section, and it was felt that the total weight of cooked meats, sausages, and puddings that were sold on a weekly basis was getting closer and closer to being on par with the output of any other factory in the nation. It was anticipated that the general people would continue to have a clear appreciation for consistency in this regard, and the demand that they were working hard to meet was considered to be the best criteria for determining the value that was offered by the many types that were made. It was mentioned in the report that the consequences of the Pigs and Bacon Bill, which would be passed in due time, could not yet be assessed, despite the fact that it was anticipated that it would come into action in the near future. With the main goal of stabilising circumstances for the producer on terms that would offer adequate compensation, the Bill was drafted with the objective of taking action. In this aspect, the Bill was seen as good; nonetheless, the recommendations it included to establish industrial control were key examples of a tendency that may be considered harmful. Apprehensions were raised over the possibility that producers would develop an excessive sense of optimism, which would eventually result in an excess of supply that would have a stifling impact on trade. In each and every transaction, the elements of supply and demand were of

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

the utmost importance, and it would be unreasonable to neglect them. Because it was firmly thought that this outlet would always be valuable to producers, efforts were made to retain existing relationships in the live pig export sector. A number of these links were maintained. British purchasers expressed pleasure with the quality of pigs exported from the Irish Free State, and a lucrative market was predicted for a much larger number of pigs. This was despite the fact that the quantity of pigs transported from the province of Munster during the previous year was relatively low. As a consequence of low prices in Smithfield and large export charges, the pork export trade throughout the season leading up to the end of the year was not as successful as anticipated. This was mainly due to the fact that low payments were realised on this side of the transaction. Nevertheless, it was concluded at the meeting that this was judged to serve as advantageous for Irish farmers to have the pork trade as an outlet for any prospective surpluses, and it was justified to maintain uniformity in both the amount and quality of the pork.

According to the report that was compiled by the Committee of Management, the amount of net profit that was realised for the year was much greater than the previous year. In order to arrive at the net profit, the company stated that extensive provisions had been made for depreciation in buildings, plant, and equipment. Additionally, stock was appraised in order to discount any regressive fluctuations in the trade. As a result, the Society's financial situation at the end of the year was unusually strong, with liquid assets surpassing liabilities by a total of £3,020 greater than they had been at the end of 1931. Regarding the trade in hides and skins, they registered as buyers and exporters with the intention of ensuring that farmers get the most advantages possible from the Calf

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Skin Bounty Scheme, which was implemented the previous year. They launched the system that would pay the whole reward in addition to the commercial worth for each and every skin that met the requirements of the programme. The overall amount of skins that they purchased was among the highest among exporters, and they were able to handle shipments from even the most remote regions of the nation. In addition to sending skins, hundreds of individual farmers from counties such as Galway, Mayo, Donegal, and Cavan often expressed their appreciation for the prices that were returned. They intended to take part in the same manner as in previous years in order to accomplish their principal goal of ensuring that farmers received the most possible benefit. Due to the fact that the problems that were faced were far more severe than those that were expected, the chairman expressed sorrow that the report for 1934 could not contain a declaration of success in building a tannery.

During the middle of April 1935, the 'Cork Examiner' published a letter that was released by the CFU about Cussen's detention. The letter was written in a harsh manner. At their first meeting after the General Manager (Mr. E. J. Cussen) was imprisoned, the Committee of Management of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing, Ltd. wanted to make their most vehement protest against the scenario that had been created as a result of the circumstances. They wished to bring to the attention of the general public as well as the government that the position of this Society, which was one of the biggest in Munster dealing in agricultural goods, was severely humiliated as a result of this situation. They were of the opinion that Mr. Cussen's extended absence from duty was a direct blow to the producers of the county, which was something that they were unable to afford at the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

current moment. It was signed by Mr. D. Hurley, who was serving as the Acting Manager.

A thorough and lengthy search was conducted by detectives in the June of 1935 at the main slaughterhouse and head office of the Cork Farmers' Union's co-op, which was located on Anglesea Street, in Cork City centre. There was a removal and confiscation of several documents. The primary individual to be prosecuted was the CFU's Mr. Fahy, who was sent to the Union Quay barracks, and where he was eventually freed.

The Imperial Hotel, Cork City centre, once again served as the location for the fifth annual general meeting (AGM) of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing, Ltd, which occurred in March of 1936. The Chairman of the Society said in his presentation that the balance statement of the Society, as of the 31st of December, revealed that the Society's liquid assets were greater than its obligations to the bank and other creditors by a total of £10,391. This showed that the Society would have been able to pay an amount equal to one pound to its shareholders if it had dissolved on January 1st. 6.d. for every pound that is invested, with an extra reserve of £12,570 that is reflected in assets that are frozen, such as buildings, equipment, and machinery. In spite of the fact that he understood the worries over the substantial amount that was owed by various debtors, he informed them that 92% of this sum had been paid by the 31st of January, and an additional 6.5% had been received by the 22nd of February. It was determined that the remaining 1.5% could be recovered. About one-sixtieth of one percent of the Society's total revenue was written off as bad debts, amounting to £371.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Following this, the chairman proceeded by outlining the effects of the Pigs' and Bacon Act, which was passed in October and is responsible for managing the trade in bacon. Despite the fact that this law placed restrictions on production and advancement, it also made it possible for the Society to plan out a month's worth of sales and production, which resulted in a more efficient alignment of output and expenses. The members of the Society were finally able to profit from this advantage. The Committee expressed the expectation that they would be able to continue distributing cash bonuses to shareholders when the current year comes to a close. These bonuses are calculated based on yearly supplies that are documented in bonus books.

Mr. O'Sullivan, who was present, pointed out that the domestic bacon trade in the United States was hampered by the inadequate production quota, which only met the basic requirements of the domestic market and the export quota for the United Kingdom. At the same time as he pushed for fostering market development, he warned against the idea of forsaking traditional home links in order to satisfy American demand. In addition, the chairman drew attention to the developments and new equipment installations that had taken place in the prepared meats trade, which provided services to 2.5% of the city's population. In recognition of their achievements, he praised both the management and the production personnel.

The approval of the statement of accounts and balance sheet was submitted by Mr. Von Kohn, and Mr. D. O'Connor, who commended the good report at a time of stress, supported Mrs. Von Kohn's proposal. In response to his inquiry on the yearly turnover, Mr. Cussen provided the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

following information: £137,000 in 1933, £183,000 in 1934, and £227,000 in 1935 each year. Mr. PJ. Halliden expressed his appreciation for the report, which served to showcase the achievements of well-executed collaboration within the agricultural sector, therefore transforming a year of uncertainty into a profit for the organisation. It was a tremendous advantage, according to him, that Edward J. Cussen was a talented organiser, and a highly effective honorary secretary of the CFU.

Mr. Lehane expressed his worries on the overdraft of £11,000, the loan of £2,000, and the debts totalling £16,500, which was approximately three times the amount of capital that was subscribed. The rumours of returning shipments from the United States of America were investigated by him. This was clarified by Mr. Foran, who was representing Messrs. Magennis and Co., the firm's auditors. He said that the Committee of Management decided to go with bank accommodation rather than requesting cash from shareholders for the installation of equipment. It was certified by him that 92 percent of the financial book debts had been recovered, which served as evidence of a sound financial situation.

The problem of returning bacon was addressed by Mr. Cussen, who confirmed that some returns were made owing to mismatches in specifications. However, he promised that there were no losses incurred since the bacon that was returned was resold at a profit. Along with the adoption of the report and accounts, the approval of a dividend of 5% on share capital was also granted. Messrs. Eugene Daly and H.J. were re-elected as a result of a proposal made by Mr. D. O'Connor, which was supported by Mr. P. Crowley. The Committee of Management was referred to Cussen. The motion that Mr. M. Twomey

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

made, which was supported by Mr. J.J. Buckley, resulted in Mr. A.J. Magennis being re-elected as auditor.

A reception was organised in Dublin City in April 1936 to welcome Captain J.P. Quish, General Secretary of the League of Youth, following his release from a twelve-month jail sentence connected to his actions surrounding the sales of confiscated cattle. Quish had been incarcerated for his involvement in some of these operations. Those who were present included the Comdt. A.J. Cronin, Director-General of the League of Youth, and Mrs. Cronin; Lieutenant C. Lee, Divisional Director, North Dublin; Captain G. Geraghty, Vice-Divisional Director; Captain C. Coughlan, Secretary of the League of Youth, Dublin County, and member of the Central Staff; Miss Lem Molphy, District Officer, North Dublin; and Miss Falkner, District Officer, South Dublin.

At this controversial meeting, and despite the celebratory context, was underscored by tension, Cronin delivered a speech in which he said that their society was founded on the basis of sacrifice. Since the beginning, he claimed, it had steadily continued on its path, despite the fact that it had been attacked from every direction. All of the attempts to stop its advancement or change its path, including the use of mob violence, legal and illegal meddling from the government, and reckless political propaganda, had been unsuccessful. He gave credit for the organisation's continued existence and growth to the bravery, patriotism, and fervour of young people all around the nation. To celebrate the return of their General Secretary from Arbour Hill, where he had been imprisoned for faithfully carrying out his duties and because the current government feared the revelations that would result from his continued investigations into the disposal of seized

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

cattle in Northern Ireland and England, they had gathered together to extend their warmest greetings. As a representative of Cork, Edward J. Cussen said that Captain Quish was not responsible for any offence committed against the Free State. He also issued a challenge to the authorities, demanding that they specify the nature of the alleged offence that he committed. Instead of pursuing and punishing the honest people of County Cork, who, as a consequence of government meddling, were no longer able to pay their land annuities and local rates, he recommended that the Flying Squad might be better engaged searching for the individuals responsible for the murder of Admiral Somerville. While they were rejoicing over the fact that Captain Quish had been released, Comdt. It was imperative that they do not forget Captain John L. O'Sullivan, and the other detainees who were still being held captive at Arbour Hill, as Cronin implored them to do so. They were reminded of the obligation of appreciation that they owed to these guys, who were suffering the difficulties of prison life because they loved their nation more than they loved their national freedom. He reminded them of this responsibility of thanks and gratitude.

A meeting of the Standing Committee of the Cork Farmers' Union was conducted at the main office of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir, according to a story that was published in the Evening Echo in September of 1936. A very full attendance was present, and Mr. E. J. Cussen presided over the meeting. The major purpose of the gathering was to develop the specifics of the argument for an increase in the price of this season's grain. This argument was to be presented to President de Valera during his stay in Co. Cork by the delegation that had been selected.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

It was brought to everyone's attention that the Grain Growers' Committee of the Beet Growers' Association and the Irish Flour Millers' Association are now engaged in negotiations. Given the actions performed on behalf of the whole wheat-growing community during the Dublin discussions, a protracted debate occurred over whether or not it was unnecessary for local action to be conducted in order to lobby for sympathetic consideration by the government. After further consideration, it was agreed that the request for an interview with the President should remain withdrawn. It was believed that the Departments of Industry and Commerce and Agriculture would be provided with all of the pertinent details after the conference that was held between the Growers' Committee and the Flour Millers' Association. This idea led to the decision that was made. Rather from being beneficial to the discussions, it was believed that unilateral or sectional action taken by the Cork Grain Growers' Association may be detrimental to the process.

Mr. W. R. Kelleher remarked that the conclusion of the ongoing discussions in Dublin would most likely be announced within the next day or two, and he was certain that an increase in price would be given. He explained that the negotiations are now taking place in Dublin. He attributed the statewide demand for a rise in price to the Cork Grain Growers' Association, which he said was the source of inspiration for the demand when their first conference met. There were allegedly submissions made at the Dublin Conference on the basis for the demand that were stated during that original meeting. Mr. D. O'Connor said that he was of the opinion that the price of the crop that would be harvested during this season would be around 27s 6d per barrel. On the other hand, if this were

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

to be true, farmers all throughout the nation would get around £260,000 in benefits, with the County of Cork receiving approximately £40,000. He had high hopes that farmers in Cork would finally come to the realisation that there are huge benefits to being organised and would band together to fight for lower pricing for their goods. For bringing attention to the fact that there is a need for a rise in price given the present circumstances, as well as for establishing the County Cork Grain Growers' Association in order to promote the demand, he expressed his profound thanks to their chairman.

It was recommended by Mr. D. Murphy that the Association should not be content with only getting an increase in the price of wheat. Barley and oats were other significant crops that required the organisation's efforts to ensure that they were sold at levels that were profitable. It was brought to his attention that the Beet Growers' Association had made arrangements to dispose of extra beet pulp at an abnormally low price for the next season, so putting the industry at danger of incurring losses. When such a situation arises, the Association has the ability to defend the interests of Co. Cork growers and also protect the interests of farmers in any other situation that is comparable. During this meeting, it was determined that , despite the protracted agricultural conflict, and the organisation suffering from several negative incidents, plans would be made for the establishment of other branches around the county.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE TRAGEDY OF MICHAEL

PATRICK LYNCH

Michael Patrick Lynch is a name that has been inextricably linked to the political history of Co. Cork, as well as agrarian politics in general. In addition to this, it is connected to the tragedy that might befall young individuals who find themselves in a very poor financial situation.

An post published in 2019 on the well-known website dubbed "Irish Family Detective" has taken on the challenging task of finding the specifics of Lynch's past. The townland of Lyre, Carrignavar, County Cork, which is situated to the north of the city, was the location where Michael Patrick Lynch was born on March 16th, 1912. His parents, Daniel Lynch and Hanora Lynch (née Dunlea), were the proud parents of their son. During the census that took place in 1911, Daniel was identified as a farmer. His son Thomas, who was three months old at the time, and his wife, whom he had married in 1910, resided with him. Thomas was Michael's eldest brother from the previous generation. At the age of twenty, he had begun his connection with the Blueshirts, which was prompted by the radical atmosphere that prevailed during that time period.

During the month of August in 1934, the city's major thoroughfares were transformed into a battleground. The seizure of livestock was a complicated issue that came up because of the situation. As a form of retaliation, the British administration imposed significant taxes on cattle in reaction to the decision made by the Irish government to withhold five million pounds in yearly payments of land

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

annuities to the British government. As a direct result of this development, the animals were taken away. In an attempt to challenge the government of the FF and address the implications of the economic struggle with Britain, the Blueshirts took the initiative to advocate for new agricultural tariffs. This was done in an effort to address the consequences of the conflict. There were around three thousand members of the Blueshirts movement who participated in a demonstration in Cork City on August 13, 1934, to voice their objection to the seizure of livestock. It was mostly concerned about the cattle that were about to be auctioned off at Marsh's Yard, which is located on Copley Street. One truck was driven through the locked entry gate of the yard by a group of people wearing blue shirts driving it through with force. As a consequence of the firing of their rifles, detectives from the Armed Special Branch were responsible for the death of young Lynch and the injury of at least five other individuals. A bigger gathering of demonstrators had arrived and pressed around the entrance, and police officers in uniform approached them throughout the confrontation. It was exactly eight o'clock in the dusk of that turbulent day that Lynch passed away as a result of the injuries he sustained. The bullet wound that he sustained was to his abdomen, and he was positioned adjacent to the driver of the vehicle. On the day when Lynch passed away, the wife of Mr. Eamonn O'Neill, a member of the Fine Gael party in West Cork, attended to him. After the dead person's corpse was transported, it was brought to SS Peter and Paul's Church, which is situated in the heart of Cork city. Following that, the funeral procession was located in Dunbullogue Cemetery in Carrignavar, which is located in the county of Cork. During the burial service for Lynch, which took place in Carrignavar, a large number of people came together.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Eoin O'Duffy and Patrick J. Manley were the ones who delivered the principal remarks. Within the pages of the very acclaimed book titled "*A Nation is Born: Ireland in Colour 1923–1938*," which was released by Gill Books in 2023, there is a colour photograph of Lynch's burial. Mel Ferrell's book, "*Party Politics in a New Democracy: The Irish Free State, 1922–37*," states that it is thought that the funeral was attended by more than 10,000 people. Additionally, it is believed that the funeral acted as an important propaganda weapon and a stimulus for development for the Blueshirt movement. For his procession, a large number of people lined the major streets of Cork city centre. This was a scene that had not been witnessed since the funerals of the Ballycannon Boys and Terence MacSwiney, which took place more than ten years previously.

During his speech in the Dáil on November 14, 1934, James Fitzgerald-Kenney, a Fine Gael TD from South Mayo, questioned the Minister for Justice about his knowledge of the event that took place on August 13, 1934, at Marsh's yard, which was located in the City of Cork. Fitzgerald-Kenney's question was an inquiry into the Minister's knowledge of the event. During the course of this occurrence, six individuals belonging to the "S" Branch of the Gárda Síochána fired firearms, which included rifles and revolvers, at a group of roughly twenty individuals who were not armed. Consequently, Michael Patrick Lynch was murdered, and six other people were injured as a consequence of the incident. One of the questions that he asked was whether or not he was completely aware of the fact that these people were confined to a small space and had no means to escape the fire. Furthermore, he inquired about the legal proceedings that had been taken against the six individuals belonging to

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

the "S" Branch of the Gárdá Síochána in relation to the occurrences that took place in Marsh's yard. In response, Fianna Fáil minister, Patrick Ruttledge, said that he had entire awareness of the events that took place during the incident as recounted by the Deputy, and, moreover, that the answer to the latter half of his query was "in the negative." Ruttledge said that he was sure that these Guards performed their obligations and acted responsibly when he was questioned by the Director General of Mayo about the reason why there had been no indictments brought against them. Moreover, he endeavoured to bring to the attention of the Deputy that during the whole of the investigation conducted by the coroner, there was not a single hint of the claim that was being made in the investigation conducted by the Deputy. Although Mr. Fitzgerald-Kenney was feeling a little irritated at this point, he made a joke that "with all respect to the Minister, there was" and "I would like to inquire of the Minister if he intends to take seriously his assertion that the 49 Guards were unable to cope with 20 men without opening fire with their rifles."

In 2019, John Arnold wrote an essay for the "Evening Echo" in which he made the observation that the economic concern brought on by "Brexit" was similar to the anguish that eventually led to the shooting and death of Michael Patrick Lynch.

In addition, Raymond Ryan makes the observation that prominent agricultural personalities who were members of the Blueshirts had also been members of the Cork Farmers' Union. The event, albeit being terrible, would forever be remembered for its infamy. The notorious "Battle of Cable Street," which took place in East London during the same decade and included Oswald Mosley's

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

British Union of Fascists (BUF), has been referred to as the "Riot at Copley Street." This occurrence has been given the name "Riot at Copley Street," which sounds reasonably similar to that situation. In spite of this, it is possible that this is an inaccurate portrayal of the atmosphere and circumstances surrounding this tragedy. In County Cork, it is perhaps more popularly seen as the tragic passing of a young man whose family had suffered a great deal of loss.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CFU

ELSEWHERE

As Raymond Ryan wrote in 2006, that, in opposition to annuities, farmers in the 1930s first reacted by forming additional local associations as a means of organising themselves. Farmers' associations that were already in existence, such as the Cork Farmers' Union (CFU), provided support for the newly organised efforts of farmers and demanded that annuity and rate payments be discontinued. Dublin served as the location for the establishment of the National Farmers' and Ratepayers' League. Two senior campaigners from the Cork Farmers' Union, W.J. Fahy and Thomas McCluskey, were appointed to the position of director of organisation by the League. The CFU itself affiliated to the league.

Brooke Wellington ('B.W.') Brasier, a Protestant who served as chairman of the CFU in the 1920s, made a significant impact in public life. He was inducted into the 'Dictionary of Irish Biography.' As noted in his entry, in addition to being an important member of the New Land League, he was also a founding member of the East Cork Unpurchased Tenants Association and served as its honorary secretary. As a consequence of the land annuities movement, he was included in the group of individuals who were imprisoned for a brief period of time at the Curragh camp in 1935. He was also responsible for negotiating a large number of land acquisition plans that weren't included by the land purchase acts. In addition to serving as the chairman of the South Cork board of public health, he was also a member of the Cork County Council from 1925-1940, the committee of agriculture for the county of Cork, the committee of the county library for

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

Cork, and an advisory committee that was created to investigate the possibility of building a commercial airport in the county of Cork. In addition to his role as a peace commissioner, he made significant contributions to the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust, the Legion of British Ex-Servicemen, and the Ballycotton branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). He was also an active member of the board of administration of the South Infirmary and County hospital. In addition to being selfless and full of energy, he had an intense curiosity in the growth of tourism, sea angling, and the care of the underprivileged. However, in 1937 and June 1938, he topped the vote for Fine Gael in Cork South-East, and he was a member of the Dáil public accounts committee from 1937 until 1940. He was originally elected to the Dáil in 1932 as an independent candidate for Cork East, but he lost the election in 1933.

Likewise, Thomas Linehan was a large farmer and politician who lived from approximately 1859 to October 15, 1938. From 1922 to 1936, he was an elected official in Seanad Éireann. As a Farmers' Party candidate, he was initially elected to the Seanad in 1922. He was re-elected to the Free State Seanad in 1925, and performed this role for a period of 12 years, until its abolition in 1936. Following a clash with the Farmers Party leadership, from 1928 onward, he was an independent member.

Linehan, who was born in County Cork, was known as a large farmer who spent a significant amount of his time and business at Ballinvarrig House in Whitechurch, County Cork. He passed away on October 15, 1938, at the age of 79. He served as the inaugural secretary of the Irish National Land League in the county, as well as the vice-chairman of Cork County Council, a chairman of the

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

CFU in the 1920s, and a trustee and president of the Irish Farmers' Union.

In late July, 1941, the 'Southern Star' and the 'Cork Examiner' documented that, due to the sudden passing of Mr. Edward J. Cussen, who served as the managing director and acting secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir and Marketing Ltd., there was widespread sorrow felt across the county and beyond its borders. The death of Mr. Cussen occurred abruptly and without warning the Mercy Home in Cork city. He was a well-known person in the agricultural community of Ireland, and he was born and raised in Charleville. The establishment of the Cork Abattoir, as well as its subsequent success, may be substantially credited to his initiative and competence. He arrived in Cork city in 1923 to serve as the hon. secretary of the Cork Farmers' Union. Later, 1934 saw him get an appointment from the Cork County Council to serve on the Cork County Committee of Agriculture. During his time on the committee, his contributions to the discussions were consistently of great importance. In addition to that, he was a member of the Munster Agricultural Society, the Irish Meat Exporters' Committee, and the Agricultural Consultative Council. He was a significant member of the Blueshirt group in Co. Cork, as well as the New Land League, despite the fact that he was not a politician in the traditionally accepted sense. The fact that he passed away at a very young age was a tremendous loss. He left behind a large family.

On multiple occasions, the Mr. Cussen gave lectures at places all over the nation on a variety of topics related to farming, notably in relation to the production of pigs and bacon, since he was well known as an expert on these topics. When he spoke at events like the annual Congress

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

of the Irish Dairy Shorthorn Breeders' Society, he was always a speaker who engaged the attentive focus of his audience. His fluency of language, along with his personal understanding of the topic, made him a speaker who held the audience's attention. The enormous expertise that Mr. Cussen had in these areas was already well known to his more personal contacts, particularly those who lived in County Cork. He was admired for these and a great number of other attributes, which contributed to the fact that he was a very personable and well-liked personality. Cussen resided at Shankiel House, Co. Cork.

During a meeting of the West Cork Board of Health and Public Assistance expressed their condolences to the family and widow of Mr. Cussen, who had died away. Mr. D. J. Kingston, M.C.C., who was the one who proposed the vote, noted that the late Mr. Cussen was one of the most influential individuals in agricultural circles in the county and that he had developed markets outside for their agricultural goods. The industry in the nation has benefited substantially from his assistance. Because of his extensive understanding of the industry, both the previous and current governments had sought his counsel and assigned him to crucial commissions. His expertise had been appreciated by both governments. The motion was supported by Mr. J. C. M.C.C., who said that he was profoundly affected by the untimely passing of Mr. Cussen. In addition, Labour's Mr. T. J. Murphy, T.D., M.C.C., expressed his support for the vote by expressing that the farmers had a tremendous deal of gratitude for Mr. Cussen. Murphy declared that he was revered by people of all social strata due to his exceptional abilities. Cussen is buried in St. Finbarr's Cemetery, Cork city.

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

One other figure of note is Patrick Joseph Manley. Like Barrett, Linehan, Brasier, Cussen, and O'Gorman in the 1920s, the energetic 'Packie' Manley was amongst the standout figures of the CFU during the 1930s. Not only was he chairman of the effectively autonomous and powerful CFU during the infamous annuities campaign, and chairman of the Cork Farmers' Union Abattoir & Marketing Co-operative Society (previously serving as a founding board member, and driving the otherwise stalled project towards an achieved goal), his abilities were exercised in other parts of the broader agricultural movement. As mentioned in a newspaper article, it was one of the largest agricultural co-operatives in Munster, and also appears in Patrick Bolger's book '*The Irish Co-operative Movement*', published by the IPA in 1977. Manley was a member of several local and national boards regarding agriculture. These included serving as honorary secretary of both the Cork Milk Producers' Association and the Irish Milk Producers' Association. As well as serving as a member of the Cork Milk Board, which had been a municipal statutory authority, he was the driving force for its creation in the mid-1930s. He possessed a great deal of admiration within the agricultural community of Ireland, as well as in the business establishment of Cork City. As a young man, Manley was elected to the National Executive of the Farmers' Party, which merged with CnG in 1933 to become Fine Gael. During this time, he also served on the Co. Cork Executive of the Blueshirts, the strength of which was displayed at the notorious 1934 raid of Marsh's Yard, Copley Street, Cork City centre. Manley was due to appear at the infamous military tribunal in Dublin City regarding the farmers' guerrilla campaign, but instead was kidnapped. Manley's time as chairman of the CFU is especially interesting, because, at the height of the campaign, the conventional executive meetings no longer

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

appeared in the mainstream press, with most reference of the CFU linked to the unprecedented activity of the period. Born on 19 March in either 1902 or 1905, he had hailed from a ‘well-to-do’ background, and grew up on a large farm. Attending the exclusive Christian Brothers College, Cork, (known colloquially as ‘Christians’) school as a youth, winning the Munster Rugby Senior Cup circa 1920. He was a younger cousin and neighbour of the War of Independence internee group leader, and, later a Fine Gael TD for South Cork, Tadhg Manley. He was also the father of the famed camogie player, Rena Manley. Packie J. Manley died in 1975, following complications regarding a car accident, one consequence of which was a coma. Manley has since come to the attention of national publications, such as ‘That’s Farming,’ and the ‘Irish Farmers’ Journal,’ and, in 2024, a Perpetual Cup named in his honour was inaugurated by the Munster Agricultural Society, one of the original Seanad nominating bodies.

Lastly, an old and lengthy poem about the CFU, written by a school student, is now featured on the Dúchas website. Stored at the National Folklore Collection, based in UCD, the poem originates from a school north of Blarney, and is titled ‘The Cork Farmers’ Union Ball.’ It goes as follows:

*“In the year of 1920 we had some sport and fun.
Although the times were troubled with heroes on the run.
When they organised a racket to please each lad and lass
At that lonely hillside school house - they call it Ballyglass.*

*Provisions they had plenty with refreshments there galore
I wish you heard the music when the dancers took the floor.
They had a fine piano, to play for big and small
A gadget, and a fiddle, at The Farmers’ Union Ball*

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

*They came from Cork and Mallow, from Blarney and Clogheen.
From Donoughmore, Duhallow, and that highland village Bweeng
But they never heard such music since the time of Adam's fall,
As we had around the schoolhouse at the Farmer's Union Ball.*

*They had a jig, a reel and Polka for we had no jazers then.
Buts lots of colleens all skipping round the men
Nor did they wear short dresses
no necks, nor arms bare.*

*Some wore fine silken stockings but never bobbed their hair.
They didn't bob nor shingle, though they wore fine dresses all.
And they kept their Irish fashions at the Farmers Union Ball.*

*What foolish glowing shadows now pierced the welling brain
Of them that donned false colours in the nightmare of Sinn Fein.
They wanted sport and money but no other should have fun
Now to stop our merry making they robbed the postman's gun,
They didn't face the Saxon; they might get wounded sore,
They'd rather buff their neighbour's who were living quiet next door.
With masks and blackened faces dressed in a cow-house stall
They made straight for the schoolhouse for the Farmer's Union Ball.*

*Their leader then stepped forward and tightly gripped the door,
And sent a young man marching up through the schoolhouse floor
He shook his humpty shoulders and then we heard a shout,
"I bare orders from the captain - just five minutes all clear out"
"What (with) orders" cried young Downey
"We want no bombast here,"
"Do you think your masks and shot guns would fill our hearts with
fear.
You know I must keep order, give up your shouting brawl
And clear outside the schoolhouse
At the Farmer's Union Ball.*

They battered in the windows; we saw each broken pain .

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

*Although they bore no orders from their leaders in Sinn Fein
They said we're our for Ireland - out for freedoms "Tá-g-Brághh."
But 'twas only ditch-planned orders and a branch of mob - made law
If the dancer's they could scatter at the beer they'd have fine fun
This for that they worked the wattle the revolver, stone, and gun.
But it rose their fighting anger when the shots came through the Hall
So they buckled up for action at The Farmer's Union Ball.*

*Through the hallway bursty the dancers to meet that martial clan
And soon to fight they tackled and took them man for man
With sticks, with stones, and wattles the blows came thick and sore.
Twa's like a small pitched battle around that schoolhouse door
The postman's gun being empty and the barrel broken in
To help the merry dancer's the women backed the men
They ran down through playground and soon they scaled the wall.
When they saw the women charging at The Farmer's Union Ball.*

*That wild hallow being over without a wound worth while
They settled down melodious in the good old Irish style
They drank a health to Ireland and what could they do more.
But sing and dance till morning around that schoolhouse floor.*

*A merry night being ended with spirits light and gay
I saw their final parting just at the break of day
With a song from Daniel Cronin
"May we rise and never fall"
T'was their last and parting chorus at the Farmer's Union Ball."*

And so ends this wonderful poem!

'TIL THE COWS COME HOME

**SOURCED PORTRAITS OF
RELEVANT FACES**

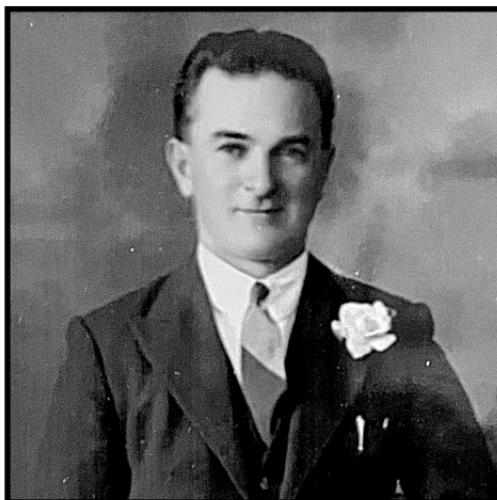


LATE MR. E. J. CUSSEN

Cork Farmers' Union,
Abattoir & Marketing

LIMITED

regret to inform their customers
that they will be unable to accept
orders or execute deliveries until
Monday, July 21st, owing to the
lamented death of the Managing
Director, MR. E. J. CUSSEN.

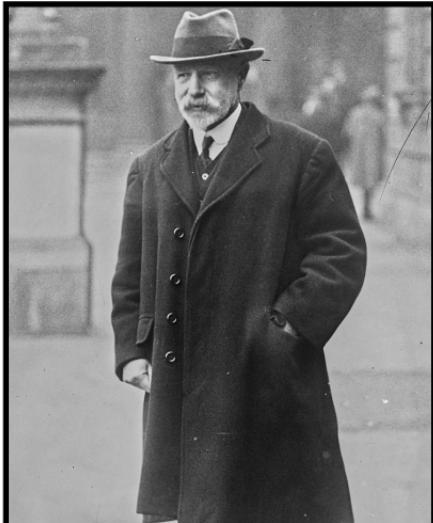


PATRICK J. MANLEY

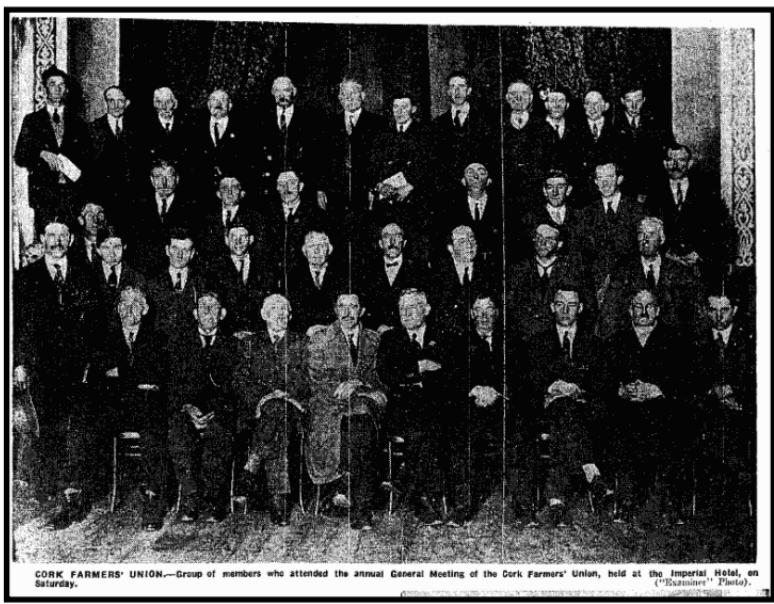
'TIL THE COWS COME HOME



MICHAEL PATRICK LYNCH



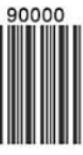
SENATOR THOMAS LINEHAN



CORK FARMERS' UNION.—Group of members who attended the annual General Meeting of the Cork Farmers' Union, held at the Imperial Hotel, on Saturday. (Examining Photo).

A story that entails death, 'round up' arrests, and the tireless organising and ingenuity of a group of men who have been wrongly overlooked by contemporary history books. This book tells the story of the CFU, which possessed at least 121 branches at its height across the county, was lead throughout the 1920s and 1930s by figures such as B.W Brasier, E.J Cussen, and P.J Manley. Despite the organisation's popularity and influence, it has seemingly been almost entirely forgotten about, including its key role in spurring the annuities campaign during the 1930s, as well as the events which lead to the death of 22 year old Michael Patrick Lynch, at Marsh's Yard, Copley St, Cork City. It also documents the successful creation of the CFU's Marketing & Abattoir Marketing Co-operative Society, which attracted members as far away as Donegal.

ISBN 9781445713571



9 781445 713571